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AN
ESSAY ON CHILDREN,
AND
MESENTERIC OBSTRUCTION, ATROPHY,
OR
MARASMUS.

CHARLES WOOD, PRINTER,
Poppin's Court, Fleet Street.

AN
ESSAY ON CHILDREN,

AND THAT DISEASE DESIGNATED

MESENTERIC OBSTRUCTION, ATROPHY,

OR

Marasmus:

ADAPTED PARTLY FOR PARENTS.

AND ALSO VARIOUS

EMBODIED OBSERVATIONS OF PRACTICAL USEFULNESS

UPON GENERAL ADULT AND JUVENILE HEALTH, AS

INFLUENCED BY AVOCATION, MORAL CULTURE, LOCALITY,

AIR, ANIMAL FOOD,

&c. &c. &c.

WITH

CASES OF CURE

OCCURRING IN THE AUTHOR'S PRACTICE.

BY A. L. PEARCE,
SURGEON.

"Do not all men complain how little we know and how much is still unknown, and can we ever know more unless something new be discovered?"—BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

"Veritas ubique locorum eadem est."—CICERO.

LONDON :
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,

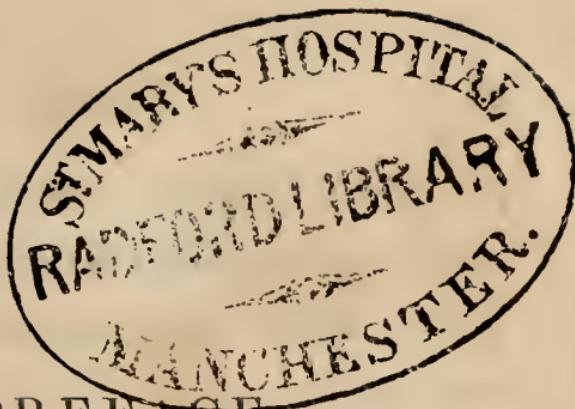
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SHERWOOD, GILBERT, AND PIPER, PATERNOSTER ROW ;
AND T. BURGESS, COVENTRY STREET.

1838.







PREFACE.

THIS book, the first written work in which I have engaged, would not be offered to the Public, did I not hope it to contain some observations tending to the general good, and the advancement of that profession of which I am a member. The vocation, which has for its basis the cure and alleviation of disease, and consequently the happiness of the community at large, cannot fail to interest every humane mind; and the individual who, in its pursuit, brings into operation the energies of an active and benevolent spirit, cannot be deprived, for any long time, of the approbation of

the just. But it is the duty of every man, before he claims the distinction which such worthiness implies, to well examine his intentions and his deeds, nor commit the graceless discrepancy of mistaking avarice for activity, or a frigid rectitude of morals for an enlarged benevolence. Whatever credit may accrue, or whatever motives may be imputed to me, for thus putting myself in print, I will not forestal, but at once solicit that indulgence which is due to a first Essay, and the imperfect tact of an untried Author.

There is, in this work, a great deal of what is called digression and violation of unity; the subject, perhaps, has enticed my pen not unfrequently to the very frontiers of error.

Much matter could have been de-

livered in the form of notes, and that it has not been so placed, to the severe critic may appear a fault. Notes, however, do not, it would seem, become so necessary to the understanding of a book as some persons may believe ; and here is the opinion of a good grammarian but indifferent politician on the subject : “ Let me observe to you, that notes ought seldom to be resorted to. Like parentheses, they are interrupters, and much more troublesome interrupters, because they usually tell a much longer story. The employing of them arises, in almost all cases, from confusion in the mind of the writer : he finds the matter too much for him, he has not talent to work it up into one lucid whole, and therefore he puts part of it into notes. Notes are seldom read : if

the text, that is to say the main part of a writing, be of a nature to engage our earnest attention, we have not time to stop to read the notes ; and if our attention be not earnestly engaged by the text, we soon lay down the volume, and of course read neither notes nor text.”

The principal object of the following pages is to promulgate some principles by which children may be reared with the greatest probability of success, and to point attention to those violations of the organic laws of life, which conduce mainly to disease, but especially to that disease so incident to childhood, which is known by the comprehensive term of atrophy, or marasmus.

The different opinions which medical men entertain respecting this complaint are too obvious, and much

to be deplored, hardly any two individuals agreeing as to the best line of practice for its relief. Calomel, in repeated doses, is advocated by one, continuous purging by another, iodine and alkalies by a third, blisters and counter-irritants by a fourth, and so on ; but let the result of all or any of these practices be ascertained, in any given number of cases, and there will be found little cause for congratulation. The candid part of the professional world do not, however, hesitate to acknowledge the great difficulties which beset them in the treatment of confirmed atrophy, and despair often of effecting any striking change for the better, when called to a strongly-marked case. The practice which I have so successfully pursued, and the results of which terminate this Treatise, is re-

ferable to producing a change in the working of the chyliferous system, and strengthening the digestive organs by every possible means ; more especially by the repeated and continuous administration of the various tonics, of which the columbo powder will be found highly advantageous, and slight mercurial alteratives every other night, hyd. cum creta, grs. v, or the submuriate in half-grain doses only. Frictions of warm salt and water over the abdomen and lower limbs are employed daily, sometimes in conjunction with fatuous matter ; the insatiate appetite I have not been in the habit of supplying, ordering only that quantity of food to be given, which may relieve the pressing necessities of the hunger, without reference much to its quality. It is only when the symptoms are giving

way, and the obstruction is gradually breaking down, that I consider an interference with the diet necessary; then much assistance is derived from a supply of highly restorative food, guarding, carefully, that accumulation does not take place to excess in the bowels.

In France the malady is very prevalent amongst the children of the poor and middling classes, where it is designated carreau, but from what analogy it is perhaps difficult to explain.

The French physicians deem it a highly dangerous visitation, and treat it as a description of scrofula.

In two cases where I was consulted the patients were abandoned as lost by the French doctors, one of whom was Professor Marjellon, of the Ecole de Medecine in Paris.

Of these, one recovered perfectly under my treatment, and the other died under the hands of an English physician, after I had withdrawn my attendance. Iodine is a favourite remedy on the continent for the carreau, but it fails as often as any other medicine. The symptoms there, as well as here, are much resembling those of scrofula. In my estimation it is totally a distinct disease, and is confounded with scrofula solely from the external phenomena agreeing so much in their characters.

French children have usually a cachectic and sunken look, and seem, in many respects, suffering under a subdued marasmus. Their bodily powers are far inferior to those of the offspring of British subjects. This may be attributed to

more causes than one, but assuredly for one, to the innutritious diet upon which they are fed, and the frequency of their maigre or saint days, when sour soup, fish, and fruit, constitute their only sustenance.

English children who are consigned to French schools, to perfect in the language, suffer very much from the deprivation of their accustomed substantial food, and return home, after a period, gifted perhaps with a fashionable tongue and Parisian air, but sadly extenuated in their persons, and too often deteriorated in their morals.

It has been objected by one or two friends, to whom the manuscript of this book was submitted, before going to press, that it embraces too many subjects, and that its ostensible purpose is often lost sight of, to dis-

cuss matters wholly irrelevant to the title. For, say they, what have your meditations upon cholera, your digressions upon the blood, the misery of beggars, of madness, and the longevity of actors, to do with the diseases of children? Verily the question is more easily put than replied to; and it may be any thing but prudent in me to state, I consider it vastly more easy to find multitudinous faults, than to write even a very little book. Nevertheless, what is written is written. I commend my work to the generous feeling of the public, myself assured that those principles and views only are advocated in it, which have been sanctioned through all time by the writings of philanthropy, the suffrages of the wise, and the customs of the good. “*Non eadem miramur*” is a Roman adage.

In homely language it signifies,
“*Tastes differ.*” But *truth was and is*
eternally the same.

A. L. P.

23, Bedford Place, Kensington,

March 20, 1838.

CONTENTS.

CHAP I.

Page

SECT. I.

First Change from Foetal to Independent Life ...	1
--	---

SECT. II.

Early Management of the Cord and Child	2
Weaning	6
Dress and Cleanliness, &c.....	8

SECT. III.

Choice of a Nurse—Cold Bathing recommended	10
--	----

CHAP. II.

SECT. I.

Opposite Appearance of healthy and unhealthy Infants, and general remarks.....	15
---	----

SECT. II.

Symptoms of Disease	23
Gestures	24

	Page
Respiration	26
The Skin	28

CHAP. III.

SECT. I.

Observations on Domestic Prescriptions, &c.	29
--	----

SECT. II.

Peculiarities of Infancy, in contradistinction to Mature Age.....	33
Temperature.	36
Progress of Childhood	38

CHAP. IV.

SECT. I.

Necessity of Nutrition.....	42
-----------------------------	----

SECT. II.

Quantity and Quality of Food, &c.	43
--	----

SECT. III.

Digestion.....	49
Alteration of Drinks in the Stomach.....	54

CHAP. V.

ATROPHY, NERVOUS CONSUMPTION, OR DECLINE.

SECT. I.

Predisposing and exciting causes of Atrophy.	58
---	----

CONTENTS.

xix

Page

SECT. II.

Symptoms	60
Hereditary Disposition.....	63

CHAP. VI.

SECT. I.

Mesenteric Obstruction, or Suppression in Children of the Chyliferous System.....	68
---	----

SECT. II.

Juvenile Liability to the Disease	71
---	----

SECT. III.

Progress of the Disease	74
-------------------------------	----

SECT. IV.

Atrophy in Children arising from Bad Air.....	81
---	----

SECT. V.

Influences of Polite Education, and breathing Pure or Impure Atmosphere	84
---	----

SECT. VI.

Atrophy, as the consequence of Acute Disease in previously healthy subjects.....	91
--	----

CHAP. VII.

SECT. I.

Atrophy the result of Infringement of the Organic Laws	95
--	----

	Page
SECT. II.	
Atrophy from neglect of Moral Culture	107
SECT. III.	
Atrophy from the operation of particular Trades, &c. &c.....	116
The History of the Perth Family	119
SECT. IV.	
Deleterious Influence of other Trades.....	134
CHAP. VIII.	
THE HEALTHY INFLUENCES OF SOME LOCALITIES, TRADES, AND PROFESSIONS.	
Influence of Profession.....	141
CHAP. IX.	
SECT. I.	
Atrophy arising from Cold, Deficient Food and Raiment, &c. &c.....	143
SECT. II.	
Atrophy arising from Bad and Defective Food, &c.	146
SECT. III.	
Atrophy caused by the Innutritious Diet of Cheap Schools	149

	Page
SECT. IV.	
Atrophy of Beggars	151
SECT. V.	
Atrophy arising from Excessive Evacuations...	153
Purging.....	155
Loss of Blood.....	155
SECT. VI	
Atrophy from other Local Evacuations	169
CHAP. X.	
INDICATIONS OF THE CURATIVE PROCESS IN ATROPHY, AND CASES OF CURE.	
CASE I.	
Marasmus caused by Bad Air	177
CASE II.	
Marasmus with Dropsical Enlargement	178
CASE III.	
Marasmus with Suppuration of Scrofulous Glands	179
CASE IV.	
Incipient Marasmus and Scrofula.....	181

	Page
CASE V.	
Infantile Atrophy from total Suspension of the Chyliferous System	182
CASE VI.	
Atrophy in an Infant from Defective Parentage	185
CASE VII.	
Marasmus with Rickets	186
CASE VIII.	
Marasmus from Deficient Transmission of Chyle	186
CASE IX.	
Atrophy arising from Curvature of the Spine...	187
CASE X.	
Unmixed Atrophy from Mesenteric Obstruction	188
CASE XI.	
Cough with an atrophoid tendency	194
CASE XII.	
Severe Marasmus from Diab̄etes	195
CASE XIII.	
A Schirrhous Tumour much decreased, by urging and promoting the Action of the Chyliferous System	197
CASE XIV.	
Partial Mesenteric Obstruction	200

CASE XV.

Previous Atrophy enhanced by Feverish Accession 201

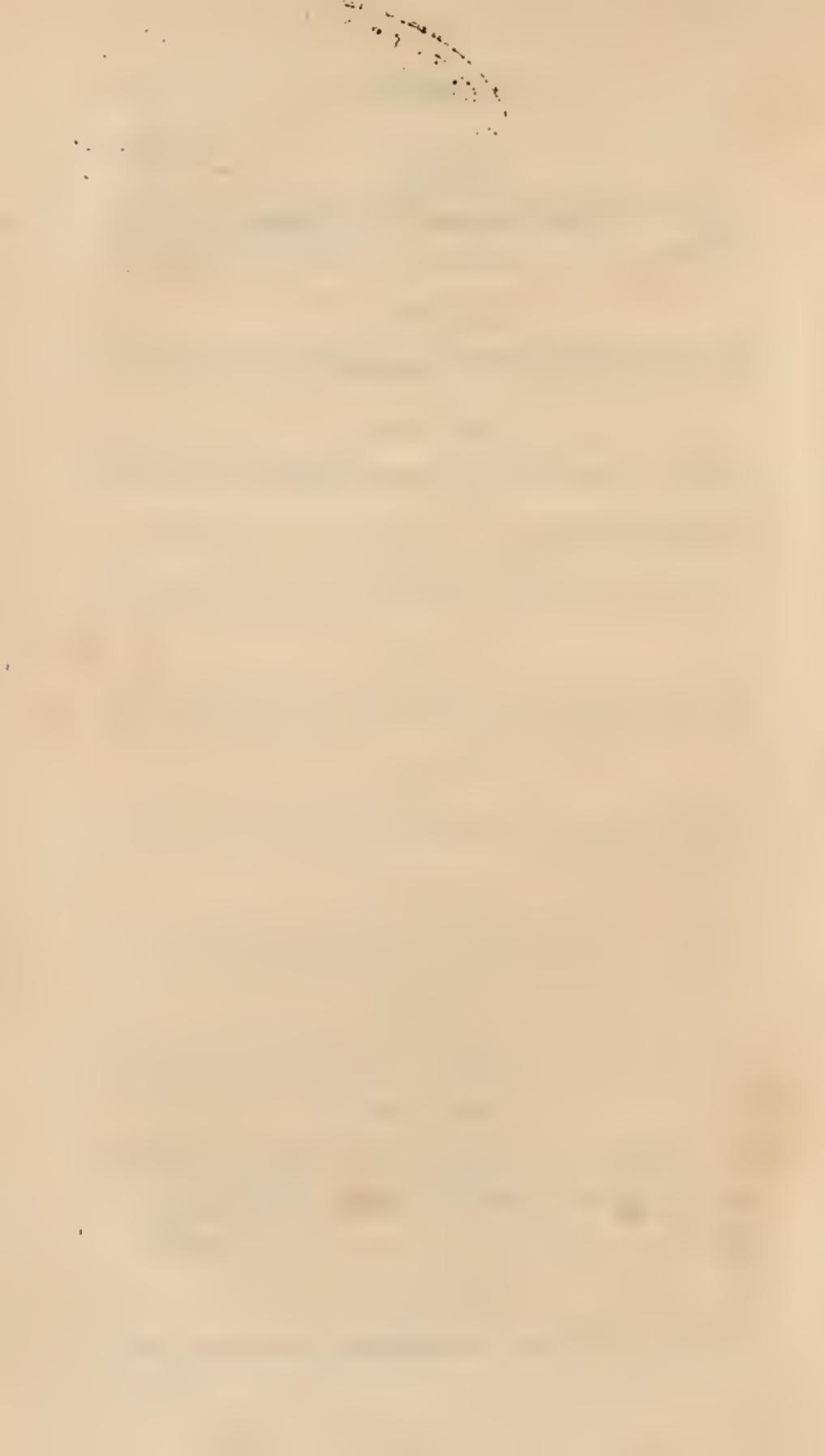
CASE XVI.

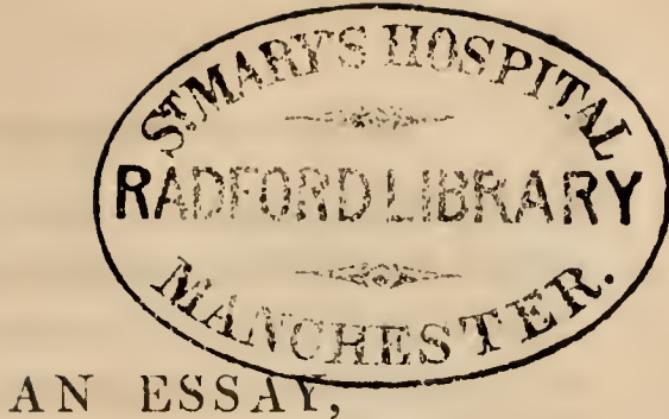
Hereditary disposition to Marasmus 208

CASE XVII.

Atrophy the result of Aggravated Measles 209

Concluding Remarks 212





&c. &c.

CHAPTER I.

SECT. I.

FIRST CHANGE FROM FETAL TO INDEPENDENT LIFE.

WHEN a child is born of a healthy mother, neither too young nor too old, and possessing itself a correct organization, it is to be presumed it brings into the world evidences on its little person of a vigorous parentage and superior vitality; and such indeed is generally the case; nevertheless, much observation and a practised eye are necessary to distinguish where health terminates and disease begins. Every midwife is or ought to be aware, that when an infant first enters this breathing world, a very important change

in its animal economy takes place; in other words, it lives independently of the mother, by means of an admirable apparatus called the lungs, and oxydizes its own blood, with the atmospheric agency, in the air-cells of that organ. This sudden mutation is generally accompanied with a lusty cry, which, as far as it goes, is indicative of health and power, for the strongest children usually make the most noise, and evince the greatest eagerness to partake of that fluid so bounteously and speedily prepared in the bosom of the mother.

SECT. II.

EARLY MANAGEMENT OF THE CORD AND CHILD.

The navel-string should not be tied directly at the birth, but after the child has breathed a few times, or cried. About two inches from the navel, several threads are to be passed round the gut, and firmly tied; and again two or three inches from the first knot is made another, between

which is divided the cord. When this is done, the child is placed in a flannel cloth called a receiver, and enveloped in it, leaving an aperture about that portion covering the face, through which it can inhale the free air. A virgin, should there be one at hand, by custom takes the infant from the midwife, and holds it in her lap, for the nurse, when ready, to wash and dress.

All things duly arranged, the nurse sits down, and, taking the child upon her knees, washes it carefully all over with warm water, to which a wine glass of brandy, or three of wine, may be advantageously thrown in. If the skin is much covered with white greasy matter, the nurse should rub on some pomatum, or fresh butter, previous to the ablution. The child is then well dried by the aid of soft linen, and placed in a second receiver to be dressed. The head-dress is first usually put on, from an opinion that cold is likely to attack the head rather than other parts: at all events, some simple integument is all that intervenes between

the external air and some surface of the brain.

The navel-string is now, as it were, rolled up in a singed rag, and turned upwards on the belly over a compress next the skin, where it is bound down, first with a linen strap, and then a roller of flannel which goes round and round the body; over this comes the little shirt, and the other et ceteras not necessary to describe. Being dressed, the arms are to be left loose, if sucking the fingers does not require the child's elbows to be pinned to its clothes.

For the first sixteen or twenty-four hours nothing need be taken beyond a little oil of sweet almonds and syrup of violets, one part oil and three parts syrup, or some barley-water or thin gruel if uneasy.

During this period there are passed, or ought to be, two or three dark stools, which are the meconium, and the child pukes up very often a portion of phlegm. It may be then put to the breast, or even before, if by crying or hunting with its

mouth, or frequent evacuations, it seems to demand a supply of food ; but later, if the evacuations have been scanty, and the child is indisposed to cry. New-born children readily throw up the contents of an overloaded stomach, and thus get rid of a redundancy, which is sometimes caused by the nurse or parent suffering them to suck without limit at a full breast of rich milk. Indeed, many say that a child ought only to be allowed to suck at stated times. I am of a contrary belief, and have ever remarked that those children are by far the finest and fattest, which are permitted to follow the cravings of nature, and take the breast without restriction as to time or place. Brute animals in this, as well as in many other matters, may read a lesson to their reasoning lords and reasonable wives.

Some people advocate the excellence of giving twice a day a little gruel or panada, because, say they, milk alone is too poor a diet, and as the child waxes older and stronger, nutrition must be proportionally increased ; but chiefly be-

cause a nurse may fall ill, or from some malady of the child's mouth it may refuse to suck. In either of these dilemmas it would be fortunate if the child should be accustomed to do that which would be necessary to preserve its life. Nevertheless, human milk is the natural food of infancy, and it is well ascertained that few children do well who are compelled to go without it. Those persons who are desirous of having a child fed with a spoon or boat should be aware, that only a small quantity is proper at a time, and that with a view to induce a habit.

WEANING.

Nature does not precisely point out either the time or manner of weaning a child, and from this remissness on the part of the good dame, much difference of opinion exists on the subject. According as circumstances may rule, we usually make the change any time from six to twelve months, and on most occasions the nine months would be found the proper period. If sucking is carried beyond

twelve months, it is not only hurtful to the mother, but the sense and cunning of the child render weaning then a matter of great trouble and annoyance.

Many mothers wean their children gradually, giving them less and less of the breast every day, and feeding them more and more, until at last they do not suck at all. The plan is a bad one: it is better, after feeding them a little for three or four days, to take the breast away entirely. By the other method, the child is irritated for a long period by partial suckings of stagnating milk, which are unhealthful.

People are very much at variance as to the propriety of giving animal food to a child, some permitting veal and chicken broth as soon as it can take such nourishment, and others insisting that the mother's milk is quite enough for the first twelve or eighteen months. This is a matter of constitution: one child requires it, and to another it will do harm; unless signs of debility are present, perhaps it would be better to

et children be well grown before they consume much animal substance, and certainly spirituous or fermented liquors are seldom or never to be employed.

DRESS AND CLEANLINESS, &c.

Common sense is a good guide as to dressing young children, and common sense will tell any parent to put on warm clothing in cold weather, and light garments in hot. In open air, where they best thrive, the feelings of children will indicate in this respect what they stand in need of.

The dress of an infant should be rather loose, especially about the chest; although nurses are in the habit of binding and tightening it, for the better convenience of handling the child. The head should, a few days after birth, cease to be kept warm, a very thin muslin cap being substituted for those used at first. In a short time that may be laid aside without fear altogether, the child remaining night and day, while in the house, without any protection to its head.

A cot, or the old-fashioned cradle, with a little horse-hair mattras, is better for a young child to sleep in than the parent's bed; for, independent of the heat given off by grown persons, infants are not unfrequently found smothered in the morning by a fat nurse or mother overlaying them while asleep. To make a child hardy, it should be washed all over in cold water every morning; at first though rather warm, decreasing the temperature daily, until it can bear the water quite cold. After the washing, some nurses are in the habit of using a little weak spirit to rub on the head, and the practice is not bad. After being thoroughly dried, the groin, armpits, and other parts which are inclined always in fat children to chafe, are well powdered with wheaten, or a scented flour sold for the purpose, which has a cooling effect: ceruse, or white lead, which was formerly often employed for the purpose, is now not used, except by the ignorant, as its poisonous qualities have done mischief in many cases. Cleanliness is highly impor-

tant to a child's health, and therefore fresh clothes should be frequently used, and examinations made as to the natural evacuations, which, as soon as passed, ought to be removed, and the parts thoroughly wiped and dried previous to putting on the clean napkins. As the sort of aliment the mother or nurse takes has always an effect on the milk, and thus upon the child, it is of importance to regulate the diet accordingly. A cool and light sustenance should be preferred to rich and undigestible dishes; windy vegetables ought to be avoided, and fruits generally of all kinds, as they infallibly cause a griping to the child. Whatever disagrees with the nurse in common health, must be studiously let alone when suckling.

SECT. III.

CHOICE OF A NURSE. COLD BATHING RECOMMENDED.

Choose a nurse who is temperate in eating and drinking, healthy, and of a

mild disposition ; and if unfortunately one has been selected of a contrary character, send her off and get another ; for much less harm will accrue in changing the child's milk, than suffering it to go on imbibing the fluid of an unhealthy, or impetuous woman ; and moreover, it must if possible be ascertained that the nurse belongs not to a family which has any hereditary taint of mind or body ; for this, though not made manifest in the woman externally, may lurk in her system and vitiate her milk ; she should also have suckled one child, and have given proofs thereby of her power to nourish and sustain a second. Those nurses are deservedly most approved of, who do not have their menses during their period of suckling ; yet many good ones have them regularly, and if the child is not deranged in its health at the time, it is not a sufficient reason to change your nurse. But be it observed, that children are sometimes much disordered by such a visitation in the nurse, and then the remedy must be supplied. As children grow up, in pro-

portion do we increase their exercise, and send them into the open air, and subject them also to the invigorating powers of the cold bath and sea bathing ; and that especially where there is a tendency to rickets, glandular disease, or corpulency. On the Continent, cold bathing is not so much used even as in England ; for foreigners have, with many home people, an insuperable objection to the operation, and cherish prejudices against the practice, which have no claim to attention, save what is due to the fears and anxieties of tender parents. These objections have been, its being so alarming to a young child, even as to cause in some cases convulsions, doing a great shock and harm to the nerves, and giving coughs and catarrhs ; and lastly, the repelling of constitutional eruptions, or the healthful efforts of nature to throw off some potent disease. As for the cold bath causing convulsions, or any important nervous derangement from fright, I have never met with such a case ; and it is simple enough, at first, should the child be alarmed, to have the

water tepid, and less and less so every day, until at last it bears the immersion quite cold. And children will be found to bear this watery discipline very well in a short time, more especially if they are dipped as it were playfully, by a good-natured nurse or fond mother, who will sing some nursery song the while. One or two quick immersions are sufficient, and the child being received and wrapped in a blanket, is to be carried directly to the fire in the winter time, and dried well all over, giving the head and spine a good rubbing with soft linen towels. When there is present on the body of the child any eruption, or when it has feverish action, or cough, or irritable bowels, or in fact any unusual complaint, then must be suspended immediately the cold bath; nor must it be resumed until such symptoms are gone, and its use again sanctioned by a just professional opinion. Putting children too early on their feet, and supporting their backs by strings or handkerchiefs, or imprisoning them in go-carts, cannot be too much repro-

bated. There is no question but the bandy legs, crooked spines, and other deformities of young people, so common thirty or forty years ago, mostly originated in such customs; and that the present improvement in adult proportion, so manifest to every one, can emanate from nothing but the wide diffusion of useful knowledge, which has taught in this, as in thousands of other things, the human mind to find the better way. It is now admitted, that very young children will walk, talk, and grow strong, much sooner if left to themselves to pursue the habits of simple nature, unfettered by the fears and prejudices of their parents. Suffer, then, a child to crawl about the carpet on all fours as soon as it is able; and that child will, if originally well born, become sooner vigorous and able to walk erect, than the one doomed to mewl and puke for twelve long months in the nurse's arms.

CHAP. II.

SECT. I.

OPPOSITE APPEARANCE OF HEALTHY AND UN- HEALTHY INFANTS, AND GENERAL REMARKS.

THE figure of a healthy infant should have no curves or angles, its form should be wavy and round, and capable of almost every position: it should have a bright and full eye and expanded chest, and a considerable portion of hair upon the head: the flesh should be smooth and firm, and assume, after a few days, that appearance usually designated mottled. These then are the chief indications of health in the little stranger. The offspring of scrofulous and debilitated parents, present in their unfortunate conformation the reverse of these appearances, and much care is necessary to counteract the evil tendencies of their constitution.

The limbs of such are extenuated and weak, the cry is wailing and feeble, and the eyes intolerant of light; the countenance is shrunk and pale, and indeed the *tout ensemble*, to a casual observer, leaves but little hope of rearing the fragile child.

A timely interference, however, will do wonders, and judicious management will, as it were, regenerate and reconstruct the frame.

The first point to ascertain is the quality of the mother's milk, and if sufficiently abundant; for the basis of successfully treating such cases is a powerful nutrition.

Maternal milk, if good, is of all foods the best; and next to that, the milk of a healthy wet nurse. It may be taken as a pretty correct estimate, that the whitest and thickest milk is the best, and that which upon standing a few hours produces the most cream. Poor and watery milk cannot sufficiently nourish a child, and if persisted in, will bring down even an originally strong infant, to a state of

debility, and lay infallibly the foundation of that disease which it is the main purport of this work to describe — a disease which is perhaps amongst children more extensively distributed than any other, and which assumes so many forms and features to baffle inquiry, and with most medical men to defy all cure. The mesenteric fever, along with consumption, cancer, and hydrophobia, has long been the opprobrium of physic and its sons.

Of the paramount necessity of attending to the sustenance of delicate infants, I well remember, amongst many others of a like nature, a case exactly in point. While practising at Dieppe, I was waited upon by Lieutenant F—, requesting me to visit his wife and infant, the latter three months old, both of whom he described as being in a precarious state of health, and as having been attended by a French physician to little purpose. I accordingly went, and found my patients as badly situated as their cases had been pourtrayed. The mother was young, and had been constitutionally re-

duced by two severe miscarriages, sixteen or eighteen months previously.

In suckling her little boy she experienced considerable pain and a distressing dragging sensation in the chest, which her friends attributed to a consumptive taint. The child was even more exhausted than herself, with scarcely any flesh, and crying perpetually when not at the breast, which it still took with the greatest avidity. A constant purging too had set in, and added to the mischief which was hastening it to the other world. A few minutes enabled me to decide as to the nature of both these cases, and my diagnosis was confirmed by the mother's milk, which was lamentably poor and scanty. I at once explained my view of the matter, stating that the child was starving the parent and the parent the child, and that he must be weaned, and the whole system directly altered. To point out to the parents the correctness of my opinion, I ordered the nurse to prepare some captains' biscuit and milk, and begin to feed the boy.

This was done, and he ate heartily a tea-cup full. Some tonic medicine and highly nutritious diet soon restored the mother, and the continuance of the biscuit and milk, the child. This was a case striding so rapidly to a consummation, that the mesenteric obstruction had not time to evince itself. Had the milk been some shades better, the child would have struggled on until the disease had been established, when it would have died, probably in its fourth year instead of fourth month.

Although it is my intention to direct myself, in this small work, more particularly to the mesenteric fever or obstruction (that disease which I profess to cure), I shall preface my observations on that formidable disorder, by continuing my remarks upon young children, proffering the result of much thought and some experience to all those who choose to listen to and adopt my observations.

It has often been observed, and is therefore more indisputably true, that man comes into this wondrous world more

helpless, feeble, and depending on the kind offices and tenderness of others, than any other living thing. The care which is necessary at the very dawning of his existence for the bare preservation of his frail life, must be extended, with little interruption, through many months and even years. Incapable of procuring his own food, of clothing his own nakedness, or directing his steps, he would be born only to return speedily from whence he came, and be seen no more, did not holy nature interpose, and throw the mantle of love around his young and tender form, and yield the milk of kindness for his sustenance, and teach his tottering feet how and where to fall. The young eagle cleaves the sky and gazes on the sun, the lion roams the lord of every plain ; while man, weak man, remains in infancy ; but sovereign reason, in progressing time, crowns him the monarch and the chief of all.

The great fiat of creation thus then sending us into the world destitute and unprovided, naked and unarmed, it has

ever been necessary to adopt some means of ameliorating our helpless state. These means are various, and opposed as custom dictates, yet all tending to the same end, the preservation of the race of man. To describe them as they are practised by the different nations of the earth would not be consistent with the limits of this book ; the exigencies of the swarthy sons of India, every one knows, are very dissimilar to those of civilized Europe or a northern clime.

The children of healthy English parents are generally robust and well-made, and inclining to a fair rather than a dark complexion. The limbs, as before stated, are round, forming, with the body, continual waving lines, and are capable of great flexibility. It is no uncommon thing, to see an infant amusing itself, while laying on its back, with sucking one of its great toes. A child of twelve months I was attending with a broken thigh, was constantly recreating himself in this manner with his sound leg.

When the mother has a good breast of

milk and a vigorous constitution, she will act wisely in suckling her infant until it is twelve or fourteen months old, during which period the clothing must be adapted to the state of the weather, inclining more to coolness than heat.

This discipline, however, will not agree with many fashionable mothers, who have a much greater taste for waltzing and operas than the music of their nurseries. The position is good for all that; and married ladies who adopt the immutable and simple laws of nature, may, in after life, congratulate themselves upon escaping dropsies, cancers, and other weals and woes more especially incident to the daughters of dissipation and wilfulness.

There was more philosophy in the reply of Napoleon to one of the ladies of his court than the emperor was perhaps aware of. A beautiful and haughty dame asked him, "which lady, of all those that frequented the palace, he thought the most fair and desirable." "Madam," said he, "it is that matron who rears and perfects the most children;" and he might

have added, it is she also, who is or ought to be the most healthy and most happy.

There is not much to be said relative to children enjoying a healthy action; influences, producing in the sickly very serious consequences, have very little or no effect on them. Plenty of air, exercise, and after weaning, simple food, will be all that is necessary to the continuance of their well-doing.

SECT. II.

SYMPTOMS OF DISEASE.

As it has been stated that roundness and firm flesh are the chief indications of health, so are also flabbiness and wasting the great indications of disease. If the joints of an infant are prominent and the skin loose, it cannot be in health. A local or general disorder must have set in, or the food is in some way improper, and does not produce nourishing chyle.

A great deal may be deduced by ob-

serving the configuration of a young child. If the front of the chest is raised and the sides depressed, it is a sign of ill health ; or if the abdomen juts forward too far it indicates the same thing, and if on the contrary it is hollow, it is a sure sign of disease. The fatness or leanness of a child must ever be carefully attended to : fatness points out that the nourishment is in over proportion to the exercise taken, but leanness is the opposite of this. The head ought, in proportion, to be larger than that of a grown person ; but, should it be too large, a mortal disease has in all likelihood set in.

GESTURES.

The gestures of health are natural, and, if the term may be allowed, flowing. In sickness they often indicate the nature of the disease : the legs drawn up towards the belly, with crying, are proofs of pain and tenderness, which are augmented by pressure. Should the hands be raised often to the head, accompanied with moaning, no time should be lost in pro-

curing the best advice, for it points out that water or inflammation is there. The child, under such circumstances, is not tranquil, without having the hands applied to the head and face. Another indication of the disorder is a desire for picking perpetually something or other. A child will pick its own skin almost into a hole, or will pick away its eyelashes, or a hole in its cheek or nose, or it will pick the bed-clothes, or another child. The abdomen, in these cases, is the seat of disease, owing to too great an accumulation. Two or three grains of calomel at bed time, and a little magnesia in the morning after, will generally relieve this, but when the bowels again get full, the picking recommences.

Starting when asleep or awake may often arise from slight causes, but it is often connected with a disorder of the brain, and must be watched. The eyes, in such cases, often put on a pearly appearance, which is better known from observation than it can be from description. In disease too they often become

dull, or assume a degree of quickness quite opposed to their usual appearance. Any particular look of the eyes is a warning of mischief, whether the pupil is much dilated or contracted, or there is squinting or convulsive movements when asleep; each of these symptoms is in itself bad, and demands immediate attention.

RESPIRATION.

The respiration of health is formed equally of inspirations and expirations; when they are unequal there is difficulty of breathing. Then should there, which often occurs, be a rattling sort of noise in the throat, it merely indicates the presence of phlegm or a slight cold: in such cases some opening medicine and the warm bath at going to bed will be proper. But when there is heard a peculiar kind of wheezing noise, not unlike the crowing of a cock, there is reason to apprehend the presence of a very dangerous disease, namely croup, or inflammation of the trachea. Leeches should be put upon

the throat immediately, and medical advice procured: a very few hours in these cases determine the life or death of the child.

There is during dentition mostly an increased flow of saliva, being an effort of nature to relieve the gums of a slight inflammation that is going on. Should the child be convulsed, and cut the teeth with difficulty, the gums ought to be lanced.

The bowels in every case must be attended to, for four complaints out of six arise from constipated or neglected bowels. The stools ought to be from two to four in number, every twenty-four hours. In health they are consistent, and are as it were squeezed out; but in disease they are watery, and thrown out with much force: this indicates great irritation and requires medical aid. The stools of a child ought never to be offensive, in the accepted sense of the word: when it is the case, it arises from fever or accumulation in the intestines, and must be combated with some brisk purging medicine.

THE SKIN.

The elasticity of the skin is very great, and useful to the animated body, by adapting itself to the different changes of bulk and position. This property is more remarkable in some parts of the body than others, particularly in the scrotum or purse, which, in disease, is always loose and flabby, but with returning health becomes more tense and firm. The muscles themselves, while healthy, are exactly the length of the parts between which they are situated, however varied be the position of the parts. Thus the deltoid muscle fits the shoulder, whether the arm hangs by the side or is reclining upon some object; the muscle keeps equally well in contact, and appears to fit quite close, whether the distance between its extremities is more or less. In disease the case is not so, the muscles seem to be too long, and their power of adaptation lost, becoming thoroughly relaxed.

CHAPTER III.

SECT. I.

OBSERVATIONS ON DOMESTIC PRESCRIPTIONS, &c.

IT is and has been for some time the fashion to follow the instructions of certain writers upon domestic medicine, in the treatment of the most serious complaints of children. Nothing can be more pregnant with mischief than this, for medical men themselves, of the greatest experience, are frequently obliged to confess their ignorance as to treating them ; for be it remembered, these little patients cannot describe, as adults do, their feelings or their pains. The pulse, that usual tell-tale of disease in riper years, in infancy cannot be deemed a guide, inasmuch as the commonest excitement, even the pricking of a pin, will render the pulsations too rapid to be accurately counted. Nothing but experience and observing

the habits and gestures of those children revelling in health or pining in disease, can afford the proper data on which to act.

Mothers therefore, who, from a disjointed description of the maladies incident to their offspring contained in works upon *domestic medicine*, presume to trifle with them, by prescribing their own remedies, are committing a great and probably cureless error, and will regret their rashness eventually.

The simple rule of conduct is this: when a child becomes ill, trust not to books or busy-bodies, but obtain good medical advice: and here it may be observed, should not that advice prove speedily beneficial, why get better.

Dr. A—— and Mr. B—— may be very eminent, and have a deserved reputation; but if on a fair trial they do not relieve urgent symptoms, and complete the cure, somebody else may.

A medical man, be he who he may, whether the President of the College of Physicians or the humblest apothecary of

a suburb, ought to be estimated by the cures he performs, and by no other test. Many a fashionable physician is but a reflection of the chariot in which he rides, an idle vanity and affected show. Some noble and generous minds there are, though, which adorn their profession, and can justly lay claim to Apollo's boast, of "*opif erque per orbem dicor.*" The able and humane prescriber will never shrink before the unerring ordeal of his own deeds.

The treatment of children must be ever regulated by circumstances, and peculiarity of constitution: that which is adapted to the strength of one child, will be highly detrimental to the debilitated state of another, and hence the impossibility of laying down arbitrary rules of cure. Suppose a child of a weakly and scrofulous habit, is seized with croup or inflammation of the lungs, no medical man would be rash enough to apply the same number of leeches to such a subject, as to the child of strong constitution and tense fibre; nor would he administer

six grains of calomel instead of one or two. Or suppose a child to be seized suddenly with convulsions, which may arise from half a dozen causes; can the plan of treatment for the convulsions arising from dentition, be at all analogous to the treatment of the convulsions arising from water or inflammation on the brain, or those which commonly precede the eruptive stage of small pox? The merest tyro in physic must answer, No, certainly not. How dangerous then must be the meddling of that mother or stupid old nurse, who would confound the leading symptoms, and administer from *book guidance*, the same medicines for all. The only book mothers ought to consult on such perilous matters is (a poor pun!) the Bath Guide; for if she puts the ailing child into hot water, nine times in ten she will be acting properly; especially if she follows up her treatment by consulting the most successful medical man in her neighbourhood, without reference to his fine establishment and carriage.

Domestic interference, then, being deprecated, it is not necessary to enter

further upon a desription of diseases, excepting one, or their treatment, as far as regards young children.

It may nevertheless be as well to enumerate a few of the most formidable of their ills, in order to deter parents still more from interfering in matters of dangerous consequence, in attempting to steer the frail bark of life, belonging to their offspring, amidst rocks and shallows requiring more experienced pilotage. These are, jaundiee, infantile fever, abdominal tumour, various convulsions, indigestion, inflammation of the eyes, crooked spine or rickets, worms, water and inflammation on the brain, seald-head, croup, and lastly marasmus or mesenteric fever; with a list of contagions commonly known to all.

SECT. II.

PECULIARITIES OF INFANCY, IN CONTRADISTINCTION TO MATURE AGE.

It is well ascertained that the greater proportion of the human infant is constituted of fluids and gelatinous substance,

and that this state of things is identified always with excitability and irritation. The minute capillary arteries are more numerous and sensitive than in after life — those of the stomach, lungs, and intestines particularly so — and are alive to all external and internal agencies. The influences of temperature and food on the health of the infant through the extreme vivacity of the capillary vessels are very great, and will at once strike every person, as being an important feature of consideration. The mucous membrane lining the stomach and bowels is the chief organ by which digestion is carried on—that wonderful process which is the basis of life itself, and the great agent of the phenomena of animal existence. Food is brought in contact with this membrane, which stimulates it to the execution of its office. The delicacy of the membrane in infancy is very considerable, and is adapted only, strictly speaking, for the reception of the mother's milk, and the milk in its turn is adapted especially to the organ.

This affinity cannot be interfered with, without producing more or less derangement, and disturbing the nutritious functions, and hazarding even life itself.

The stomach of infancy and its digestive powers are extremely delicate, so that the introduction of any other food than woman's milk is productive of a violent change, a febrile excitement, and perhaps death. Instances however occur, where the change must be risked to save the life of the child, as in the case detailed some pages back, where little or no nutriment was supplied by the mother. Children brought up by what is termed hand, are very seldom healthy or long-lived; for the redundancy of nutrition they receive becomes eventually the fuel of fever, and nature is exhausted, and inflammation is excited almost at the beginning of life.

A mother, then, should be impressed with the duties she owes to herself, to society, and to her infant, and suckle, if possible, those children which she thinks fit to bring into the world.

TEMPERATURE.

Cold exerts as marked an effect upon the air-passages of the lungs, as injudicious diet does upon the mucous membrane of the stomach, and it acts as violently and perniciously upon the surface of the skin. A new-born infant has for months previously been preserved in a warm and unvaried medium, all its surfaces have been shielded from contact with foreign matter; but it comes into the world, and is exposed to a powerful change of temperature: air fills the lungs and expands them, air surrounds all the external skin. Now if it be cold and sudden in its application, mischief must ensue; for the change of temperature will produce inflammation on the lungs, which is one of the causes of infant mortality. The bad effect of cold is twofold; first it acts upon the skin, contracting and diminishing the capacity of its blood-vessels; and secondly, by this contraction the blood is driven away to the internal and distant parts, especially the brain, where it frequently excites mortal disease.

Children bear cold, from this delicacy of structure, very badly: that degree of cold which is really conducive to the health of the grown individual, produces in them the most injurious effects.

It is a well-known and painful fact amongst medical men, that the greater proportion of the deaths which occur to young children originate in the application of severe cold.

The mortality in poor and crowded districts, where ignorance and privation march hand in hand, is truly lamentable. The right conduct of the period of infancy is again partially repeated: an infant is to be entirely supported, for the first eight or twelve months, upon the mother's milk; presuming, of course, that the parent is abundantly supplied with the fluid, and that it is sufficiently rich. The child is to be kept always in an equal, warm, and moderate temperature, and surrounded day and night with a large volume of pure fresh air. The whole surface of the body is to be washed daily, first with warm, then with tepid, and in the later periods cold water,

using immediately after considerable friction. It should be what is termed short-coated as early as convenient weather permits, which will give the limbs freedom to play, and enable the child to roll about the carpet.

Nothing in the shape of medicine ought to be administered, beyond a tea spoonful or two of castor oil, or a few grains of magnesia, to regulate the bowels, should they become constipated.

Soothing, or quack medicines, ought never to be resorted to, for they contain mostly preparations of opium, and are given to produce sleep to the child, or relief to the nurse. In such cases they answer the end proposed admirably, for the infant sometimes finds the sleep of death, and the nurse the permanent consummation of her lazy tendencies.

PROGRESS OF CHILDHOOD.

Now from the seventh or ninth month, to the second or third year, are developed rapidly all the tissues and organic fabrics. From day to day ossifi-

cation advances, and the soft solids grow more firm; the young muscles swell forth and increase in power; the brain, the throne of reason, is enlarged, its wonders shown, its will declared; sensations become more exact and vivid, and in a wider field attempt to range. Perceptions become more true from day to day, and speech begins. Then too are affections formed, and dislikes conceived; passions fostered, and habits good or bad induced. Each and all of these events exert a potent influence over the child's economy and well being, and are indeed the gushing springs of life, from which all that is noble or vile, amiable or morose, merciful or tender, must descend, and prove either a blessing or a curse. As the child in strength and bulk continues to increase, the bones, muscles, and whole body acquire firmness and cohesion; but the capillary system still maintains its activity, and for its support a large supply of nutrition is absolutely necessary; the size and augmentation of various and impor-

tant organs are still to be perfected: chyle is the material from which alone the structure can be finished, and should it be withheld, the building totters at its base, and finally falls.

Through the entire period of childhood, every effort of the parent must be directed to the formation of physical development and rectitude of morals; for once establish these, the intellectual constitution soon proclaims its power, and with proper cultivation shines forth to illuminate the whole.

Parents interested (as all must be) in the future welfare and usefulness of their children, ought to retain them, if possible, under their own eye and observation, avoiding the folly of sending them to cheap and distant schools, where they are too often impoverished in body, debased in mind, and altered in disposition.

The teaching of young persons should be confided assuredly to few, and ought in this country, as in France and Prussia,

to be in a great measure under the regulation of the legislature. In those countries it is impossible for improper or dissipated persons to keep schools, and neglect the children committed to their charge, without incurring heavy responsibilities.

CHAP. IV.

SECT. I.

NECESSITY OF NUTRITION.

IT is a wise and beautiful provision of nature, as remarked by Soame Jenyns, that all the great effects, perpetually required for the being of man, such as the body's nourishment by eating and drinking, the propagation of the species, the rearing of children, the avoidance of physical harm, &c., have been entrusted to the passions and appetites, and not to reason; because the former are regular and resistless in their operations, and the latter liable to caprice and change. For instance, as to the most important, a labourer, barely subsisting on the produce of his toil, and listening to the voice of reason, would say, —If I marry Susan Maddox, my pretty sweetheart, I cannot maintain her or the

children she will bring me, and so I'll e'en think no more of it. But the great ordinances of nature soon interfere with this resolution ; his passions become superior to the suggestions of prudence ; he marries her, with almost certain misery for her dowry, and thus creation is sustained. But for this overwhelming influence of love, as Hamlet says,

“ Who would fardels bear,
And groan and sweat under a weary life ? ”

The two great necessities of animal existence, both reasoning and brute, are unquestionably a proper supply of nutritious food, and an indulgence in the delights of love ; but the former, being the most imperative, is pursued with the greatest ardour and constancy.

SECT. II.

QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF FOOD, &c.

The description and quantity of aliment most beneficial to human life cannot be always rightly estimated, inasmuch as, like other influences, they are depending upon constitution and certain habits ;

but it may be set down as an almost unexceptionable rule, that any great wear and tear of the mind or body requires a large supply of food; and egregious health or laziness a diminished supply. All debilitating agents act most readily on debilitated individuals, hence the liability of such persons to consumption, agues, colds, &c. The great mortality of the cholera in Paris, amongst the ouvriers and hotel porters, was owing to their incapability of resisting the atmospheric miasma, through bad diet and impoverished blood. The number of deaths amounted to pretty close upon 50,000, sweeping, in some quarters, whole streets of their population. The bourgeois and wealthy part of the community were comparatively free from the visitation, because they possessed, in abundance, the best means of repelling the pest. There are very few persons who understand the secret of administering to their own health and comforts by a proper supply of food: one will overload and distend, perhaps, an already enfeebled stomach,

with high-seasoned viands and all descriptions of costly fare: another gentleman, following up some useless fancy, chooses to feed upon nothing but vegetable matter, while he has an organ of destructiveness adapted for bull beef: a third, with a short neck and glutinous blood, despising the precepts of Cornaro, wallows in turtle, and “drinks potations pottle deep;” and a fourth, with the maw of Milton’s Death, consumes indiscriminately all within his reach.

Each of these peculiarities is destructive and bad, and accounts at once for the extraordinary figures which so often are to be seen in society, objects of ridicule and sometimes scorn. The visitations of Providence are sufficiently numerous, and demand our protection and our pity; but the ills which we pull upon our own heads, and perpetuate on our progeny, deserve no quarter or commiseration, for they are self-created nuisances, offending the present community, and debasing that which is to come.

In regulating the quantity of nutriment

best adapted for the promotion of health and longevity, we must be guided solely by the wants of the constitution, and the locality in which we may be placed. Many individuals are so organized, and possess so rich a sort of blood, as to require really comparatively but a slight sustenance. Any unusual excess in eating or drinking, with such persons, produces uneasiness, oppression, and vomiting, indicating that the chyliferous vessels were previously over-burdened, and could not carry off the nutrition as fast as it was made. Such persons are remarkable for muscular power, energy, and rude health, but indeed make most unmanageable patients. The inflammatory tendencies they are subject to are fearful and various, demanding the most energetic measures for their arrest. Notwithstanding all this, they have a valuable description of constitution, which can be put to almost any purpose; like a rich ground, bringing forth abundance in due season, with little labour and less care.

Persons leading sedentary, inactive

lives, and breathing constantly good country air, should look to the Roman Calendar also, and diligently observe the fasts ; for although idleness now-a-days does not always confer rags, it does not fail to confer delicacy and disease. Nothing is so hard to eradicate as supineness, as its indulgence is progressive, and every day the powers of resistance are more and more enfeebled ; until, at last, the body becomes like an unweeded garden, “things gross and rank in nature possess it merely.”

An accumulation of fat is a very general attendant upon a luxurious, idle life, which, to the common observer, is an indication of good health : no such thing, it only shows that nutrition is redundant, and that the chyliferous vessels, having too much to do, deposit their surcharge where circumstances oblige them. This, however, is another stupendous provision of nature, inasmuch as were it not for these outlets and escapements, the blood would soon be overloaded, and apoplexies and inflammations prove more fatal than even now they are. Nothing is more

conducive to fatness than easy circumstances and a tranquil mind. Any long-continued action of mind or body produces the opposite condition: hence fat folks, of all kinds, are set down as being soft, easy, harmless individuals, incapable of achieving much mischief or perfecting much good. The master-mind of Shakespeare makes Julius Cæsar say,

“ Let me have men about me that are fat,
Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o’ nights.
Yon Cassius has a lean and hungry look :
He thinks too much— such men are dangerous.”

Is not this true? How seldom do we hear of or see a fat lawyer, a fat general, poet, or prime minister. Great fatness then is a very unenviable felicity; and should all the world grow fat, good night to enterprise, to science, and to learning.

An apology is due to the reader for wandering somewhat from the subject, *viz.* the diseases and management of children; but as the digression arises partly from the original matter, and is not (small as it may be) altogether unworthy of attention, it may be easily forgiven.

I shall again resume my more immediate observations, by endeavouring to describe, from self-evidence and experience, the very common and fatal disease, called mesenteric obstruction, atrophy, or marasmus, pointing out its symptoms, most probable causes, and effects. As preliminary matter, it will perhaps be proper to give a slight outline of the present theory of digestion, observing by the way, that our knowledge of many of the phenomena is very imperfect, and that the best physiologists and anatomists of Europe are at variance on leading questions connected with the subject of digestion.

SECT. III.

DIGESTION.

Digestion may be defined to be that process food is subjected to in the stomach, by which it becomes chyme. Its great end, however, is the production of chyle, that important fluid matter destined to supply and repair the constant

exhaustion of the animal economy and power.

The digestive apparatus may be styled a sort of canal, in different places twisted upon itself, in some places wide and in others narrow; with its dimensions capable of widening or of contracting, and into which a profusion of fluids, from numerous ducts and vessels, is poured: it is several yards in length, and may be divided into parts or districts, as follows; namely,

1. The Mouth.
2. The Pharynx.
3. The *Œsophagus*.
4. The Stomach.
5. The small Intestines.
6. The large Intestines.
7. The Anus.

Much controversy has been expended about the action of the stomach and its juices upon the food, and the result is, we know nothing about the business. The most elaborate mechanism, and the most powerful dissolving agents will only act partially upon our usual food, com-

pared with the order, influence, and magic beauty of the living stomach. Very little has been added, since the days of William Hunter, to our exact knowledge of this subject: and what he said to his pupils, may, with a great deal of truth, be said now, “Read, learn, and inwardly digest. Some people, Gentlemen, will tell you that it is a mill, others that it is a fermenting tun, and others a stew-pan; but I say, Gentlemen, it is neither a mill, a fermenting tun, nor a stew-pan, but a stomach, Gentlemen, a stomach!”

The aliment being received into the stomach, it mixes with the gastric juices, by which it is supposed to be in some measure dissolved. In four or five hours it becomes wholly converted into chyme. The chyme is propelled into that portion of the small intestines named the duodenum, where it mixes with the biliary and pancreatic juices, and is thus transformed, in a great proportion, into chyle. The chyle, having now the appearance of new milk, comes in contact with the mouths of innumerable lacteals, destined to take

it up and convey it to the mesentery, where it traverses, in various convolutions, the mesenteric glands. These latter again deliver it to the lacteals and lymphatics, which as it were coalescing, unite to form the thoracic duct (about the size of a crow's quill). This duct, ascending on the dorsal vertebræ, penetrates the left subclavian vein at its junction with the jugulars, and therein discharges its stream for the formation of new blood.

The accumulation of food in the stomach is productive of different sensations, of which it may be well to take account. The first feeling is that of a want satisfied, or a pleasure enjoyed. Hunger vanishes by degrees, and the weakness, usually attendant upon it, is replaced by new strength and activity: should, however, a continuous introduction of food be proceeded with, the stomach becomes oppressed and uneasy, and finally relieves itself, if its previous admonitions are not regarded, by nausea and discharging its contents.

One description of aliment is more satisfying than another, and of course produces soonest the feeling of satiety. Turtle, roast beef, and French fricasees, will generally assuage hunger more speedily than boiled potatoes, cabbage leaves, or bread and water.

Of the chemical changes the food undergoes in the stomach we are ignorant, but we are not so from any want of theory and explanation of the subject. There has been a great deal of that, from the time of Hippocrates down to the present enlightened era. The system of one philosopher, however, is soon upset by that of a succeeding one, which lives its day, only to give place to that of a third ; and the lamentable conviction we arrive at, in this as in the other great mysteries of nature, is, that the wide ocean of truth lies before us, while, as the astronomer observes, we only collect a shell or a pebble, here and there, upon its shore.

In a well-organized and healthy individual the chyme is imperceptibly formed ; he usually experiences, after a meal, a

fulness at the stomach, which insensibly wears away : or a slight difficulty of respiration, equally transitory. But, in people of delicate fibre and constitution, digestion is not so easily carried on ; it is accompanied by feebleness, coldness, and slight shiverings. The blood and vital energies are, for a certain period, concentrated about the region of the stomach, and abandoning the brain and other functions, leave the system depressed, drowsy, and indisposed : this state lasts as long as chymification is going on. Happily, however, laborious digestions are not perceptibly less efficacious than those more vigorously endowed.

ALTERATION OF DRINKS IN THE STOMACH.

Fluids, in respect of the alterations they undergo in the stomach, may be divided into two classes: some do not form any chyme, others are converted, in part or wholly, into chyme. To the first class belong pure water, alcohol sufficiently diluted, and acids. The alcohol, as contained in brandy and spirituous

liquors, acts differently. We all know the burning sensation brandy or alcohol produces in the mouth, pharynx, and œsophagus, and even the stomach itself. The effect of this is to excite the coats of the organ to an inordinate action, so that a great deal of secretion from the mucous membrane takes place, which the alcohol speedily coagulates. It follows, then, after drinking any fluid containing a quantity of alcohol, that albumen is deposited in the stomach, to be digested like ordinary food.

The effect of a large dose of alcohol upon the system is highly pernicious, and drunkenness or death rapidly ensue, in proportion to the excess taken and the irritability of the drinker.

Milk is a species of drink affording chyne: milk when swallowed coagulates, and the curd is submitted to the digestive process, supposing it to be used in moderation; but deaths have ensued from imprudent persons drinking largely of milk, when heated or excited: the coagulum produced was not influenced by the

solvent powers of the stomach, so that it remained like a ball in that cavity, accompanied with intolerant pain, until dissolution took place.

The liquids which pass from the stomach to the small intestines, rest there very shortly, and do not experience any change, except an admixture with the juices of the parts: chyle is not made from them at all, and they disappear by absorption, in the duodenum chiefly, and the beginning of the jejunum: when they escape by stool, it is from sickness, or the operation of purgative medicines; hence the drain which inordinate looseness, or diarrhœa, effects upon the animal system, for in a naturally healthy condition, perspiration and urine are the proper outlets of fluid bodies.

The chyme that drinks produce, goes through the same process that food does, and therefore forms chyle.

Such, then, are the leading phenomena of the digestion of fluids, and to distinguish them from the digestion of aliments was more than necessary,

CHAP. V.

ATROPHY, NERVOUS CONSUMPTION, OR DECLINE.

THIS is a disease, in Cullen's Nosology, arranged under the class Cachexiæ and order Marcores, and arises from different causes, but chiefly,

First. From an interruption of the digestive functions, and the proper transmission of the chyle to the thoracic duct.

Secondly. From all debilitating agents, as copious evacuations of blood, of perspiration, or of any of the secretions.

Thirdly. From corrupted or deficient nutriment, or bad air.

Fourthly. From absolute famine.

SECT. I.

PREDISPOSING AND EXCITING CAUSES
OF ATROPHY.

In a disease so insidious and formidable as the one under consideration, no circumstance should be omitted tending to explain its probable origin, or exciting cause. Amongst the various ills which beset us in the shape of disordered function, perhaps there is not one, that in point of universality (if the term is admissible) can be put in comparison with this, excepting always the different modifications of tubercular phthisis. All sorts of degrees and varieties of it exist in society, and the observing practitioner of London need travel but a few yards from his door to meet it in some shape or another. He perceives it in the spare angular figure of the school-boy, "creeping like snail unwillingly to school:" he regards it in the lost drunkard, staggering from a gin palace: he marks it through the thin veil of finery of the love-sick

girl: and, worse than all, he beholds it too often where adverse circumstances have engendered it, disfiguring the person of the honest, upright, and industrious man.

The predisposing causes, then, are hereditary debility of constitution, which is shown by a particular formation of body, by a long neck, and narrow chest, and prominent shoulders; fine smooth skin, hesitating weak voice, and morbid sensibility; then follow severe evacuations, no matter of what; continued purging, violent perspirations, and venereal excess especially. Diabetes, giving suck too long under debility or bad nourishment. Passions of the mind, great grief, anxiety, hopeless love, midnight study, excessive debauchery, drunkenness, &c. To these may be added, unhealthy occupations, exposing individuals (especially young ones) to mineral or metallic exhalations, and confined or vitiated air. The depressing influences of early labour, of cold, of hunger, and their concomitants, certain diseases, such as scrofula, syphilis, phthisis, measles, &c; and lastly indi-

gestion, or suspension in young children of the chyliferous system.

SECT. II.

SYMPTOMS.

The striking symptoms which present themselves to our notice in atrophy, or decline, are of a very melancholy character; and although the disease arises from so many causes, and attacks sometimes differently constituted individuals, still the external morbid appearances are pretty much the same: the disorder is accustomed to develop its symptoms in an exact ratio to the intensity of the exciting cause. If the morbid influences are not too severe, the patient complains first of increasing langour, debility, and disinclination to move about, and of an evident wasting of flesh; a yellow and sickly tinge is present upon the skin, a hollowness of the eyes, and a dark halo around them: the voice is not much affected as yet, nor the appetite; the former

has perhaps a somewhat deeper sound, and the latter, if any thing, is improved, as far as quantity goes, and there is no pain and little fever; despondency, gloom, and timidity pervade the mind, giving rise to unjust suspicions and useless regrets.

“This disorder in children commonly makes its approaches insidiously, little more being remarked at first than a craving appetite for food, which is easily mistaken for a fuller indication of health. In a short time the countenance begins to lose something of its natural animation, or blooming look, and the child reluctantly rises at its usual hour in the morning; and when risen, is importunate to be nursed, or is desirous of sitting still and near the fire, abandoning his active amusements. He complains of being chilly and tired, of having an aching pain, principally in the knees and lower part of the thighs, and which is worst after walking. He is dull, fretful, and readily weeps from causes which he would before have disregarded. The breath is fetid, and there is commonly an

itching about the nose, and either an unusual dryness of it, or an increased mucous discharge from it; a slight pain or dizziness in the head, and sometimes an uneasiness in the stomach and bowels.

“ As the evening approaches, the child appears more languid, and is desirous of going to bed early. He falls asleep readily, and sleeps more heavily through the night than usual. The tongue is white before breakfast is taken, and the bowels are either regular or loose, the discharge being scanty and unnatural in its appearance *.”

But now we suppose the morbid influences to be uncontrolled, and the disease marching on; the weakness that was experienced at first has become helplessness, and deprives the patient of all voluntary power; the wasting has become almost inanition; the muscles are too long for their origins and insertions, and seem dangling lazily from the bones; the skin is shrivelled, dry, loose, or yellow; the voice has lost its power,

* Practical Observations on Disorders of the Liver and Digestive Organs, by T. Ayre, M.D. page 48.

“and pipes and whistles in the sound,” and the increased appetite has become confirmed voracity; strange wandering pains are almost always present, which, with a slight hectic fever, continue until death calls the sufferer away for ever. Such are the symptoms of confirmed atrophy, much resembling those of the latter stages of pulmonary consumption.

HEREDITARY DISPOSITION.

If any one axiom in physiology is more true or generally adopted than another, it is that children often come into the world diseased, or peculiarly disposed to be so in a short or indeterminate time, and that parents have the unhappy ability of perpetuating their own maladies in the persons of their offspring. Hereditary diseases are very numerous, but those which are the most dreaded, because perhaps the most known and palpable, are atrophy, cancer, consumption, scrofula, madness, and gout: of these we have only to do with the first, observing however, that scrofulous diathesis and atrophied,

so much resemble each other, that the description of one would almost serve for the other, and indeed many declare miasmatic and scrofula to be the same thing: a tuberculous deposition on the tissues being more or less common to both.

An atrophied infant, in a very few days from its birth, betrays evident symptoms of feebleness; its figure, instead of being round, is angular and very small, the skin is unhealthy in appearance, and hangs loosely upon the body, which altogether seldom weighs more than four or five pounds, while a robust child will weigh eight or nine; it makes a peculiar wailing noise, which cannot be called crying, yet is indicative of derangement and distress, and it has little inclination to take the breast.

Now if this infant, miserable as it is, has the good fortune to be under the ordering of a good nurse, there is no reason why it should not live; and indeed, for the sake of my remarks on the case, it must do so. Suppose then the little feeble infant, by care and nourishment,

and warm clothing, has escaped the fate that would, under other circumstances, have befallen it, and has become a lad of ten or eleven years old: the original disease, unless removed by art (not very often the case), still clings to him, but in many points there is a change for the better. The child is noticed for warmth of feeling, for superficial and easy acquirements, for vivacity, for courage, sensibility, and generosity. He makes a bad student in most of the branches of learning, but should any particular line strike his fancy, he will lay down his mind to that alone, and in that he would make a good figure, under proper guidance. In his person he is very slight, has a narrow chest, fair hair, and smooth skin, with large veins, blue or grey eyes, and protruding upper lip. All impressions, external and internal, produce readily their effects upon him, and none more so than cold or heat: he is acutely sensitive, has little muscular energy or capability of continuous fatigue: in fine, he is a delicate, nervous boy. Some untoward occurrence at length takes place to develop

the lurking mischief. The lad has taken a bad cold, or he has been much fatigued, or been subjected to the hard fare and discipline of an unprincipled schoolmaster, or what not. The disease breaks forth, and the symptoms succeed each other, as nearly as possible as detailed two or three pages back. The patient is pronounced to be in a rapid decline; so indeed he is. Different opinions are taken, and wisely so, and different remedies are tried. One gentleman puts him under the influence of mercury, which, after doing a vast deal more harm than good, is abandoned: another, from the enlarged abdomen, pronounces the disease dropsy; then all the diuretics of the *Pharmacopœia* are put in requisition. A third calls it pure debility, and is much nearerer the truth than the rest; he, therefore, orders tonics and all the good things that can be procured out of the kitchen, which, as the poor patient has a desperate appetite, is very agreeable as long as it lasts: but this plan does not answer, the stomach becomes fatigued, and sickness or constant purging takes place; inde-

pendent of which, headache and fever are added to the other grievances, from the indigestion. The symptoms are rapidly acquiring force, and the result is, the sufferer is abandoned to his fate, and getting from bad to worse, at length dies.

That this occurs in nine cases out of every twelve of true atrophy or decline, as treated by highly respectable members of the profession, I positively assert, and challenge the contrary proof.

But that this malady in children, designated atrophy, marasmus, or decline, or whatever else it may be called, has not been properly investigated by the profession at large, I am persuaded; or if it has, the bad success of its conclusions, the poor results of its inquiries, fully justify any gentleman, who has been duly educated, in advancing his pretensions towards curing this terrible disease; especially where those pretensions to an improved and strictly normal treatment are supported by much living evidence, by numerous thoroughly successful cases.

CHAP. VI.

SECT. I.

MESENTERIC OBSTRUCTION, OR SUPPRESSION IN CHILDREN OF THE CHYLIFEROUS SYSTEM.

THIS is of all the forms of the disease the most common, most deplorable, and most difficult to cure, and has been said, with consumption and hydrophobia, to be the opprobrium of medicine. Some pages back, the non-medical reader will find a slight outline of the present theory of digestion, where it is taught, that that considerable portion of food which is converted into chyle, and which is destined in all animal bodies to be turned into blood, to repair the daily waste of the system, after traversing the convolutions of the intestines, and being absorbed by their countless lacteals, arrives at the mesentery (a sort of membranous append-

age of the intestines), to be transmitted through its glands to the thoracic duct, which duct, being about the thickness of a crow's quill, mounts upwards by the dorsal vertebræ, and empties its important milky stream into the left subclavian vein, for the purposes already stated. Such is the brief theory of nutrition, where omnipotent design is plainly discovered, and nature's watchfulness wonderfully displayed. Now it is evident, if from any cause, from any deficiency or redundancy of action, or depravity of the humours, these mesenteric glands become as it were blocked up or impervious, the chyle cannot pass through them to the thoracic duct, and that the doors of life are closed in their leading passages; and that, unless by some means these doors are more or less opened, a miserable and certain death ensues.

The case, indeed, is very similar to a besieged town, where the wretched inhabitants are cut off from their supplies of food and water, and will inevitably perish unless the siege is raised, and

their starving necessities administered unto.

This is precisely what occurs in the mesenteric obstruction: the glands, by some agency, do get blocked up, the chyle cannot pass through them, blood cannot be made as fast as it is dissipated, and the result is, starvation to the whole animal economy — a wretched, and perhaps lingering death. That a stoppage of the lacteal and mesenteric structure is the exciting cause of the malady, and indeed THE malady itself, all the symptoms sufficiently evince, and none more so than the craving and ceaseless hunger, and the commencing wasting of flesh.

The arrest of the nutrient function and exhaustion of animal energy and power are displayed at all points of the body, and readily account for those woful morbid derangements within and without. No other suspended actions or depraved motions of the vital necessities, do or can half so well answer for that chain of sympathetic disturbances which harrass and subdue the patient, as this one, all-important and

alarming as it is: *viz.* the obstruction of the chyle's progress to the thoracic duct and subclavian vein. The symptoms are widely different in the other numerous diseases of young children, and I submit easily to be distinguished by all. They are not present in simple watery head, or continued fever; or worms, or crooked spine, or inflammation of the brain or wind-pipe, or in scald-head: and if one or some of them come on in either of the contagions, they depart when the individual disease has run its course, and the little patient once more becomes convalescent.

SECT. II.

JUVENILE LIABILITY TO THE DISEASE.

The disease attacks in this form, for the most part, young subjects; and it is rare to find a confirmed case occurring after the fourteenth year. Children seem more amenable to its attacks from six months old to three or four years, than at any other period. The remote causes of the

complaint are indeed difficult to explain, nor can any positive reason be assigned why the mesenteric glands should become impervious, or the lacteal vessels cease to act. My opinion is, that in the beginning of the disease, from great and general deficiency of nourishment, and the chyle not being made in sufficient quantities or sufficiently good, the lacteal system entirely, and especially the glands of the mesentery, fall, as it were, into partial disuse, and become nearly passive. The sides of these small vessels not being filled out and distended with chyle, collapse, and unite their internal surfaces, where slight inflammation being excited by any accidental cause, lymph is poured out, blocking up their channels, or adhesions take place, firmly constricting their sides. The idea is, in my belief, a new one, and I should feel proud if the enlightened part of the profession think it an ingenious one. One thing, however, is most certain, that all the depressing influences and passions appear most calculated to produce the disease: hence we

see it in its worst forms amongst the children of the poor and destitute, in the mud huts of the potato-fed population of Ireland, and in the haunts of misery.

Where there is poverty, where there is destitution, where nakedness and cold, there, be assured, is most constantly to be found this scourge of infancy.

This is but the rule, however, and not the exception as to the locale of the disease; for the children of the rich, abounding in every comfort which art or wealth can supply, fall victims to the disorder by hundreds, although it cannot be from the operation of the same causes which give rise to the complaint in the poorer classes. In this fact consists one of the great difficulties in accounting for the origin of the disease; as it must occur in many cases where there is plenty of food, plenty of good air, and warm clothing. If my theory of the inflammation of the internal surfaces of the lacteals is a good one, and as being the primary cause of the disease, why then its frequency amongst the children of the wealthy is amply ac-

counted for too. The chyle is in their case too rich and too redundant: the delicate lacteals are over stimulated and too much worked, and, as a consequence, inflammations take place; and in their intervals of rest, when chyle is not flowing, adhesions begin, go on, and become at last complete. So much then for accounting for the disease amongst the children of the wealthy: and until some better idea obtains, this notion, although new, may be good to act upon in regulating the regimen of such patients.

SECT. III.

PROGRESS OF THE DISEASE.

The disease then, arising from whatever cause, develops itself rather slowly, and most frequently the obstruction is formed long before parents are aware of any thing material having taken place, to affect the child's health. The first thing observable is irregularity in the appetite; a languor, fretfulness, and disinclination to move about in the patient, or to mix in

the usual games of other children ; then follow considerable irregularities of the bowels, which are for the most part constive, and seldom acting without medicine. Sometimes, and indeed often, the stools are offensive and loose, and have a peculiar, disagreeable odour, like decayed vegetables. Sometimes the stools are quite hard, and the ejected matter white or clay-coloured ; and this appearance is that which commonly happens, and points out too clearly the nature of the disease — the approaching peril of the child. The change from the natural and healthy hue of the faeces to the lumpy, puttyey look they possess in the height of the disorder is gradual ; and when this change is fully formed, nothing is so likely to mislead the practitioner in the choice of his remedies. He, most probably, referring this indication, and the other symptoms, to deranged action in the liver or biliary ducts, immediately brings into play a mercurial battery on the child's constitution, which, even if carried to salivation, *never, never* shall cure

the complaint — the obstruction of the chyle bearing *not* the biliary ducts. Nevertheless, when the stools are constantly clay-coloured, let every parent know, who may read this and be instructed, some radical and severe mischief has begun; and let them lose no time in tampering themselves with what they cannot understand, but apply immediately for the counsels of that medical man in whom they are accustomed to put their trust, or to any other their judgment may select. In addition to these signs of deranged abdominal and chyliferous function, there are other tokens which speedily follow of a most manifest and decisive nature.

The child, from evincing from some period a disrelish to its food, either refuses it almost altogether, or evinces, on the contrary, an insatiate hunger. All descriptions of food, in such cases, it craves after, and eagerly swallows, from the most succulent meats down to a hard crust, the very refuse of the kitchen shelves: nothing comes amiss, nothing

seems to allay the unceasing demand of the system upon the stomach. Notwithstanding this and the other evidences of a formidable disease progressing in the patient, there is but seldom much acute pain, or fever. The abdomen, although puffy and large, and deranged in all its functions, still bears considerable pressure without denoting any great deal of inconvenience or suffering in the experiment. The mind, too, generally remains entire almost to the last, and gratefully acknowledges all those little acts of kindness and attention, which the mother, nurse, or attendants may evince, in alleviating the many wants and fancies of the disorder. The thirst is inconsiderable, the skin devoid of moisture, but extremely sensible to the operation of cold. Indeed, all the powers of the constitution and body are manifestly impeded and declining, and a thorough repose of faculty and person appears to be the condition in which the child wishes constantly to remain.

This state of things has hardly begun,

or continued but a short time, before an evident wasting of the flesh comes on; the muscles are too long for their origins and insertions; the skin becomes loose and puckery; the knees and large articulations jut out from the surrounding substance; and the belly is protuberant, drummy, and hard. The eyes also become sunk and hollow, and are surrounded with a dark or green halo. The face has the sunken cachetic look, and a feeble wailing cry of distress is almost always heard. Sleepless nights, and an aggravation of all the foregoing symptoms, soon, however, put an end to the sufferings of the little patient, unless the most prompt and effective means are adopted for its relief. These are various, according to the different notions medical men entertain of the nature of the disease, and are more or less successful, according to the rectitude of those notions. I fearlessly state, no plan will prosper which is not based upon the invigoration of the organs of digestion, and the promoting a flow of chyle. As long as the

obstruction lasts, and as long as the medicines are not directed to remove the impediment of the chyle's stream getting to the thoracic duct and subclavian vein, so long will endure the white stools, the fever, the wailing, the headache, and the inanition. It is utterly vain attempting to put down these consequences of the disease, while the blockade exists in the lacteals and mesentery. No calomel will darken the motions, no febrifuge will dissipate the fever, no leeches dispel the headache, no food satisfy the stomach and the hunger, until the chyle once more is made to freely flow, and fill its innumerable and accustomed channels. What is recommended to parents is a most simple line of conduct, which surely no candid and upright practitioner can find fault with; namely, that if, upon a fair trial, one gentleman and his remedies do no good, try a second, and even a third. In a multitude of counsellors wisdom is often to be found; but as that great and good man Samuel Johnson was wont to say, "that friendship is not always the

sequel of obligation," so also is the salvation of the sick by no means the sequel and result of the physician's great name.

Dr. Beddoes declared, forty years ago, "I know, that of all things in which they are intimately concerned, mankind are the most incompetent to judge of medical merit." And verily their discrimination has not improved unto this day. A nice person, a smooth dispose, and a prating tongue, are no evincements of profound thought. But as the sweetest kernel is often found enclosed within the roughest shell, so also are benevolence, talent, and the finest minds, mostly to be found ornamenting a homely garb, a harsh bearing, and reserved communicativeness. Doubtless, indeed, the asperity of the great moralist, and the rudeness of John Abernethy, and the misanthropy of Byron, were mere assumptions, curtains to hide soft hearts and tender sympathies; their possessors knowing of a truth, that the worst thing that can befall a man, encumbered with such losing virtues, is, after having got them, the letting the

world know it, and exposing themselves thereby to its audacious knavery, its base ingratitude, and heartless derision.

SECT. IV.

ATROPHY IN CHILDREN ARISING FROM BAD AIR.

Strongly marked cases of atrophy perpetually happen in large and crowded cities, from various and other causes than the suppression of the chyliferous system. In the beginning of this humble work it is shown, that when a child is born, a new and wonderful revolution takes place in its economy: that when breathing commences, the atmospheric air rushing down the trachea comes in direct contact in the air cells of the lungs with the blood, which being by it oxydized and converted into a bright scarlet, is sent off through the circulating apparatus, in thousands and perhaps millions of ramifications and channels, to the remotest parts of the body. This air, this vital fluid, which we must constantly inhale or die,

and destined for such wondrous workings, is composed of twenty-one parts of oxygen and seventy-nine of azote or nitrogen in every one hundred ; and taking twenty times in a minute for the mean, it follows, that 28,800 inspirations take place every twenty-four hours. Forty cubic inches of air are supposed from the best data to enter the lungs every time we inspire, and one hundred and seventy-nine cubic inches to remain in them, after a moderate expiration. Forty cubic inches of air thus, then, entering and retiring at each inspiration and expiration, and twenty inspirations taking place in a minute, we have eight hundred inches entering and passing out in every sixty seconds ; which make 48,000 in the hour, and 1,152,000 cubic inches in the twenty-four hours. Truly is it said. “We are fearfully and wonderfully made!”

This little statement of course is only meant for non-professional readers, and to show the importance of the breathing process, in influencing healthy or diseased function.

If the atmosphere in which human beings live, and especially children, is vitiated by corrupt particles, by animal, or decaying vegetable exhalations, or what not, it is a never-failing source of disease in some shape, and one amongst the many causes of atrophy. The blood, only partially oxydized, is sent back through the circulating medium, loaded with the carbon it has acquired in the body, and adulterated by the bad air. This, if pushed to an extreme, as in the instance of the Black Hole at Calcutta, where so many of our countrymen miserably perished, will produce speedy death. It is proved that the confined exhalations from human bodies congregated together, are more pernicious and destructive to human life, than the exhalations and confined breaths arising from some of the lower animals: so that six or ten persons penned together in a given space, and deprived of the due proportions of vital air, will live much longer in the company of three hundred pigs, sheep, or oxen, similarly situated, than in the company of

three hundred beings of their own order. It is not known upon what principle this is accounted for exactly, but the probability appears to me to be, that all flesh-consuming animals require more oxygen, and discharge more carbon from their bodies, than graminivorous or grass-eating animals, and as a consequence they spoil, bulk for bulk, a much greater volume of air.

SECT. V.

INFLUENCES OF POLITE EDUCATION, AND BREATHING

PURE OR IMPURE ATMOSPHERE.

A bountiful and regular supply of good air is, after exercise, the greatest promoter of health and longevity, and as it may be justly styled the pabulum, or food of life, so may inhaling its constant adulteration, be termed the destroyer and poisoner of its very springs. The greater class of diseases which attack the communities of large British towns, have their origin or aggravation in the vicious atmosphere the

people breathe: at the head of which may be distinguished, atrophy and consumption. Phthisis, or the disposition to it, is engendered for the most part by a debilitating agency, and the perpetual breathing of an artificial atmosphere. A young woman, for instance, brought up under the guardian eye of an English mother, and moving in what are termed the spheres of genteel life, is submitted incessantly to those relaxing influences, which lay the foundation of the disease; and hardly has she emerged from the surveillance of the nursery, and been taken up to be manufactured into a fine lady, than the whole battery of fashionable and accomplished follies is brought to bear upon the constitution; she is seated to the piano, or some other precious discord, for four or five hours a day, in a warm room; she is occupied perhaps as many more in the study of a fashionable tongue, or the embellishing of white paper; she partakes of a dinner at six, compounded of all the elements of disorder, which the sea, earth, and air can furnish: and increases the

mischief at nine, by drinking a strong infusion of some Chinese weed, previous to sallying forth to a ball, slenderly attired, looking as beautiful and as fragile as a young flower. These proceedings, then, are the broad but well-beaten road to imminent mischief; and on some luckless occasion, the young lady takes a severe cold, which assumes perhaps an inflammatory character: bleeding and diaphoretics are indicated, which have naturally the tendency of making an already delicate organization still more delicate; a fresh cold then supervenes, very likely before the previous one is totally relieved, and the small tickling cough comes on, the first harbinger of consumption. A shortness of breath, and universal relaxation, producing a disinclination to exertion, are the next visitants: then a falling away of flesh, and a spitting of a frothy substance, streaked a little with blood quickly follow; which, with the red hectic circle on the cheek, and night perspirations, mark the fair sufferer for the victim of mismanagement and an early tomb.

The great error in the rearing of a young English woman, is the subjecting her too much to the depressing influences of gentility and fashion. Instead of pursuing that round of folly, which needs no other description, let the mother or guardian of a rising girl enforce her getting up early in the morning from a flock or hair mattrass, instead of a downy bed: let her have for breakfast a good basin of bread and milk; and then putting on thick shoes and a warm shawl, send her forth for at least two or three hours to walk or run in the park, or fields, and inhale the pure breath of the joyous day; and then she may return to her mansion, and put in practice some elegant pastime for the future admiration of her friends. The piano or harp, if accompanied by plenty of singing, being the most eligible. And here I will take an opportunity of recommending to all young persons, who are desirous of the blessings of sound health, to make on every fitting occasion all the noise and shouting they possibly can. Singing is therefore good for them upon

the same principle: it enlarges the chest, invigorates the lungs, and strengthens the body. Where is there a stronger or healthier class of females, than the actresses and singers of the stage? So much indeed does this observation hold, that young ladies who have been in delicate health on their first appearance in public, acquire speedily remarkable energy and capability of exertion, by the future exercise of their profession (Fanny Kemble was an instance of this). But to return: let the aspirant for health and happiness take her dinner at two, made up of simple aliments: such as plain roast or boiled meat, with plenty of vegetables, and followed by some light pudding, drinking a moderate quantity of good malt liquor; and again, after a lapse of one or two hours, resume some exercise, riding, swinging, shuttlecock, or skipping; at six her tea, a slight supper at nine, and to bed by ten or eleven. This will be the effectual way to defy disease, and to convert the blooming girl into an enviable matron.

As the advantages of good air are being spoken of, it may be worth while to allude to the astonishing superiority, which the great continent of Europe has (and more especially France) over England in this important particular. Britain, indeed, may be styled (from its insular position, surrounded on every side by the ocean), nothing short of a huge drain for its continental neighbour. Six months out of the year are we choked with fogs, or encumbered with moisture, giving rise, in their constant operation on the animal frame, to all those abominable maladies which infest English society. If any persons are sceptical as to the amiable tendencies of our climate, and “tight little island,” let them, to remove their doubts, take up their quarters for a month or so at Dover, or Brighton; and then, being assured by the perpetual barkings they hear, and the sallow visages they see, that something is going on wrong with the lieges, cross over to Boulogne or Dieppe, and behold the English folks there: the difference

will be great and striking ; hardly will they hear a cough, or have to commiserate a sickly face in a week : the men are hale and powerful ; the women graceful with health and beauty ; and the sun shining forth each new morning, will give a zest to every action and impulse, and tempt the visitant to forget Britain. Every one has heard the anecdote of the two French emigrès, who having sojourned most unwillingly in our island for some years, were canvassing one misty morning the delights of their beloved France. “A la bonne heure, mon ami ; je pars demain pour la France ; ayez vous des commandes,” said the youngest. “Diable que je suis malheureux encore,” responded the elder ; “ faites mes compliments au soleil lorsque vous arrivera dans Boulogne : je n’ai pas vu l’ombre à Londrès, il y à quatre semaines.”

A child labouring under atrophy, from the perpetual breathing of bad air, is more or less affected, according to the intensity of this exciting cause ; but it

is but seldom that the disease runs on to the frightful extremities we are accustomed to witness, in the suppression of the chyliferous system. It is nevertheless sometimes a source of this disease in London, in its crowded localities, where stench and nastiness of all descriptions conspire to abuse the breath of heaven. In the way of cure, a removal to the country or sea-side, will prove more efficacious than perhaps any medicines of the *Pharmacopœia*. In the first case of cure, recorded some pages on, the disease most likely arose from bad atmosphere, yielding nevertheless to the treatment adopted without removal from the locality. Thus much, then, for good and bad air.

SECT. VI.

ATROPHY, AS THE CONSEQUENCE OF ACUTE DISEASE
IN PREVIOUSLY HEALTHY SUBJECTS.

When the inflammatory stages of scarlatina, measles, croup, the different py-

rexiae in children, are subdued, an inability of the system to rally from the results of the diseased action is sometimes manifested, and the worst phenomena of atrophy are induced. The patient, after the severer forms have run their course, refuses to be amenable to a healthy influence, and instead of improving, declines visibly, in flesh and energy, day by day. The new adversary proves more powerful than the old one, and evades steadily all the art and interference of most practitioners, till bad becomes worse, and the worst at length imperatively arrives. This condition, or decline and fall, is strongly marked by abdominal derangement, and suspension of the chyliferous power; the belly is constipated and hard, the stools white; the appetite either craving or altogether absent; and the countenance and entire system indicative of distress. Where then must we look for the seat of the mischief? Most assuredly where it is so strikingly displayed, in the cavity of the abdomen: the ob-

struction of the due transmission of chyle to the thoracic duct and subclavian vein must be removed, and the mesenteric glands once more be compelled to act, or the patient inevitably will die. To bring about this consummation, neither mercury, nor antimony, nor purgatives, nor even iodine will succeed: the whole digestive apparatus must be invigorated by the iron preparations and other tonics, and your remedies pushed on unceasingly, in spite of the accompanying fever, the affected head, the restlessness, and continually changing symptoms which may arise. The diet, while the curative intentions are going on, should be light, and as easy of amalgamation with the enfeebled secretions of the stomach as possible; always remembering, that to overload the organ is to increase the fever, and the volume of debris, which the alimentary canal has to be relieved of, without the imbibing assistance of the chyliferous vessels. When cures are effected in this common and perplexing disease, only

can they be effected by much perseverance and watchful care; and any gentleman, who may imagine he is to be successful by a coup de main, or the unlimited introduction of a mercurial agent, will reap the harvest of his mistake in his certain failure, and perhaps the reproaches of the patient's friends.

CHAP. VII.

SECT. I.

ATROPHY THE RESULT OF INFRINGEMENT OF THE ORGANIC LAWS.

It must be conceded that an infant, emanating from a sound and healthy parentage, and possessing itself (as probably it will) a perfect organization, comes into the world with the elements of a long life and much enjoyment centered in its person; and that if it continues to live, mature, and become a man, under the due and legitimate operation of the organic laws, and in strict accordance with their dictates, life will last until extreme old age insensibly wears out his animal frame, and death finally comes unregarded, and almost without a pang. But when a child springs from an unhealthy and disordered stock, not only have we early in-

dications of its unhappy origin physically presented on its outward form, but continual manifestations of deranged functional structure occurring in one or more of the internal vital organs, rendering life precarious, and enjoyment incomplete. It is impossible to see disease arriving to youth or middle age, without acknowledging it to be the result of depraved or enhanced action in some essential organ: and that depraved or enhanced action is simply an indication that that essential organ is subjected to some morbid influence, and is no longer in a proper healthy state. Assuredly our information in many cases may not be correct, and perplexing phenomena may often entangle our best opinions, and render it extremely difficult to discover the connecting links of the visible disease and its organic source. Yet this shall not affect the soundness of the doctrine advanced, nor exonerate him from the charge of dulness, who denies the existence of the sympathetic chains.

To illustrate the position of a play of

sympathies, we need take but a slight survey of the outward and visible signs of some of the diseases which annoy artificial society, and trace them back, with much ease, to their organic springs.

What are the phenomena, which present themselves at the onset of most of the phlegmasia, but sympathetic disturbances arising from the inflammatory accession? Whence come the pain and tenderness? From increased sensibility of the nerves, and the pressure of new matter upon their fine filaments. Whence is the redness? From the dilatation of the small vessels, and introduction of the red particles, or sometimes the generation of new vessels themselves. The rigors, the heat, the increased heart's action, are all referable to inflammation of some important organ. Then again in phthisis, whence the hollow or the irritable cough? From the presence of tubercles, and general irritation in the pulmonary tissue. Whence the repeated headaches? From obstructed circulation in the breathing organ, and a consequent afflux of the

blood to the brain. Whence the frequent chills? From the consumption of the vital energies in the cavity of the chest, and a diminished allowance to the surface of the body.

Look upon the miseries and outrageous conduct of confirmed mania, hereditary or acquired, and who so hardy as to deny their cerebral source. Why is the madman endued with resistless strength? Why is he not so amenable to cold and heat and hunger as other men? Why does he tear his hair, and howl in savage anguish to shed the blood of a relative or former friend? What makes his tattered blanket to him a regal robe; his tottering stool a thrice-resplendent throne; and his revolting person "every inch a king?" Because his mind is diseased; the great gift of God has suffered a violation of its organic laws, and a brutish and a dreadful energy is usurping the place of contemplative wisdom and reasoning power. Could the bony dome be lifted from the brain of the living maniac, and the brain's three coverings thoroughly withdrawn,

then might we see the morbid workings of the wondrous mass, and in its inflamed, and excited divisions trace the prime sources of the madman's foree, his glaring bloodshot eye, his cunning and unguarded deeds.

Thus then it may be freely urged, that the phenomena which display themselves in all diseases are the results of organic irritation, or disordered action in vital parts, be the organ or organs diseased more or less ascertained. Atrophy, unquestionably, is subjected to this universal law; and I shall proceed to show that that disease not only has its origin in the infringement of the organic laws, but that its marked presentations strongly characterize its source.

It may be well, in the first place, to consider what are the accepted regulations and tendencies to preserve health, and promote vigour in the living subject (and especially in children). These will be found to consist in a due supply of nourishing food, in the inhalation of uncontaminated air, in regular and mode-

rate exercise, in warm clothing, a proper quantity of sleep, and the complete subjection of the animal propensities to the wholesome restraints of reason, morality, and reciprocal right. None of these essentials can be violated, without involving the happiness of the being who perpetrates the wrong (or who has it perpetrated on its person by the neglect or viciousness of others). Nor can the entire observance of them be exercised constantly, without the individuals experiencing their benign and cheering influence, laying just claim to the protection of a Providence, the admiration of the wise and the good, and the secret and perpetual applause of his own heart.

There is a great canon which pervades every part of this planet in which we live, a just or an unjust decree of omnipotent power, according as philosophy may view the fact, or understand the everlasting fiat, hourly presented to our senses; which declares, that all must eat, and be eaten in their turn again. If we behold the eagle on the lofty crag, or “the swallow

twittering from the straw-built shed ;" if we contemplate the ravening wolf or the bleating lamb, the mammoth of the waters or the lion of the desert, or omnivorous man, the lord of all, to this conclusion we must come at last : the balance of creation is sustained by death, and generation succeeds to generation, by the strong preying for ever upon the weak. The pampered lord and the lean beggar return incessantly to their wonted soil, and grubs and worms consume alike their dead bodies, committed to the ground. Some unnecessary circumlocution has perhaps been expended in illustrating a very trite axiom — that we, in common with the brute animals, must eat and be nourished, or we must die.

I wish to demonstrate, that atrophy or marasmus originates mostly in an infringement of one or more of the organic laws. A child, when properly nurtured, will not be afflicted with atrophy, unless it come into the world diseased. Abnormal and improper nurture, then, is the cause of the complaint. Insufficient and

bad food will not furnish chyle, and chyle not being made, the blood is not supplied with its renovating powers; the lacteal system and mesenteric glands fall into disuse, and becoming passive, give rise to this disease, or to an approximate or distant tubercular deposit on some other important organ.

Throughout the whole animal world there seems to be an imperative law existing, that nothing can live and flourish, deprived for any length of time of its due quantity of food. The enjoyment which the satisfaction of hunger affords, is perhaps more intense than any other feeling; and the misery and pain which starvation produces, is not surpassed by any other terrestrial curse. Every part of the human body is undergoing a continual waste of its component parts; and should this waste not be renewed by the deposition of new matter, from the creative properties of the blood, a fearful and rapid demand takes place upon those fluids and solids already formed, and complete emaciation ensues. This effect, more or

less severe according to the deprivation of nourishment, or its vitiated nature, either becomes at once the disease under consideration, or by progressive steps lays the certain foundation of it in the constitution. Continual hunger, from poverty or neglect, appears to have the same effect upon the chyliferous and digestive powers that a deprivation of muscular exertion has upon the muscles, or mental culture upon the brain—they are alike enfeebled from want of use. The absorbent glands and system, in the absence of stimulation, will cease to act; so that when volition, necessity, or accident would urge them into action, their long torpidity frustrates the interference, and increased inconvenience attends the attempt. The symptoms which follow this suspension or blockade of the passage of the chyle to the subclavian vein, I think sufficiently indicate the disease; these will be found to be generally, hunger, wasting of the whole body, but the limbs more especially attenuated. A swollen, hard, and sometimes knotty feel over the whole surface

of the abdomen. Costiveness, and the stools when passed clay-coloured or white, corrupted or unnatural; the face shrivelled and sallow, and the eyes sunk in the orbits. There are also present, fever, sleeplessness, and irritability, and in fact the whole train of sympathies which characterize inanition in its worst forms.

The friends (supposing the case to be a child's) never cease wondering at the inordinate appetite it possesses, and can they afford it, cram down every sort of nutritious food. Still does the child get leaner every day, and at each new meal the belly juts out, in proportion to the amount of provision which is put into it; but all the good things from the kitchen of the London Tavern are unavailable until the obstruction is removed in the abdomen; and the disease arising from previous too scanty or improper food, is only aggravated by an after redundancy; it will run its course and destroy the patient, if that is not effected; here then is a violation of an organic law, as far as food is concerned.

When vitiated air is breathed, and it

constitutes the atmosphere in which a child usually is doomed to live, the blood is imperfectly oxydized; returned through the system again and again, loaded with carbon, all the vital energies are impaired, and the digestive organs sympathizing with the debility induced, the mesenteric obstruction soon takes place: and here is a violation of an organic law, as far as pure air is concerned.

If a young subject is pent continually in doors, to study or to pursue a sedentary calling to procure daily bread, that quantity of exercise which nature always demands to invigorate the nervous system, and develop muscular power, cannot be taken; the body, under the circumstances, becomes lean and irritable, the appetite declines, the abdomen swells, and confirmed marasmus succeeds; affording another instance of the disease from infringement of organic law, as far as exercise goes. The want of warm clothing or sleep are highly pernicious to young people; and although the absence of these

are not so frequently the cause of atrophy as many influences, still do they engender the malady. Artificial warmth, in this country, is required from the dawn of existence until man's latest breath. Cold contracts the animal fibre, and by throwing the heart's stream, as it were, back upon itself, and cooling the surface of the body, derangement of the nutrient apparatus ensues, terminating too often in the mischief under consideration. Sleep, nature's fond nurse, cannot be dispensed with for any lengthened period without materially injuring the brain and the whole economy of life. In children a large portion of it is essential to their well-doing; and indeed it is a question, if half their time, from the moment they enter the world until the fourteenth year, might not be advantageously passed in slumber. When from neglect, cruelty, or pain, a morbid watchfulness supersedes the tranquillity of repose, rapid wasting of the system takes place, ending perhaps in a dangerous atrophy. Thus, then, a non-

attention to the two organic laws of warmth and sleep, is sometimes the cause of this visitation.

SECT. II.

ATROPHY FROM NEGLECT OF MORAL CULTURE.

The great and endurable sentiment of Confucius, promulgated centuries before the Christian era, the essence of which is transferred to Holy Writ in these words, “Do unto others as you would they should do unto you,” is the foundation, the Alpha and Omega of all terrestrial virtue. No ranks, however exalted by wealth and power, no stations, however reduced by poverty and woe, can exist, to which this matchless golden rule of right and mercy are not to be more or less everlastingly applied: in its spirit and influences, are to be seen all the prime axioms which have tended to ameliorate the lot of man, and the purest conclusions of philosophy of the past and present civilization of the world. The entire fulfilment of its meaning, the aspi-

ration after good which this sentence conveys, would go far to deliver mankind from the yoke of evil, and to turn the whole surface of the habitable earth into one peaceful garden, where love and joy and health might dwell together. Even as the world is now constituted, it originates all our virtues and humanities, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, healing the sick, and teaching the ignorant. It is the very essence and emanation of a perfect morality, and the only safe guide to happiness in this sublunary sphere ; the beginning of evil both in body and mind is the breaking of the law, “ Do unto others as you would they should do unto you.” There is hardly a possibility of avoiding the ubiquity of this position :

“ This above all : to thine ownself be true ;
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man ;”

says the Bard of Stratford, echoing also the doctrine taught by the Chinese philosopher of twenty-four by-gone ages. Something deeply essential, then, to the welfare and best interests of

humanity, must be embodied in that law which Confucius first declared, divine love afterwards approved, and the prince of dramatic poets endeavoured by wit and verse to everywhere diffuse.

In the rearing of young people it should ever be borne in mind, that no faculty of youth is more pronounced than imitation ; hence children of nearly all temperaments take readily the impressions of good or evil, from what is constantly presented to their senses and experience in the homes or places where they live. A modest conduct cannot be fostered in the haunts of licentiousness, or a religious one where blasphemy and violence hourly assail the mind. The moral and industrious Quaker is almost assured of seeing his son pursue the ways he has himself adopted, and that he shall live respected, and die rich : the shameless rôûe, on the contrary, will hardly fail to find his son become his bane and torment, that he will live a reprobate, and die a beggar : example, the adage declares, is always better than precept. Equanimity and a

virtuous home will oftener be found to be more conducive in restraining the exuberance of youth, than forcing it to attend any number of homilies, however abounding in eloquence or replete with good intention. We are all to a great extent the creatures of habit, and vice or virtue, in virtue of this law, steal gradually on the senses, and become fixed and natural to us, long before we are aware of the potency of the charm, and the necessity of obedience which it imposes. A strong mind is occasionally to be met with, certainly, which spurns contemptuously the infatuations of custom, which will escape at once from the blandishments of a previous life of pleasure, and entering the fields of glory or usefulness, constitute one more star in the galaxy of human supremacy, for the admiration of inferior men; of this description are the immortal names of our fifth Henry, of Voltaire, Shakspeare, Oliver Goldsmith, and Lord Byron.

Indeed, for one illustrious man who has abandoned a life of renown and intelligence for the riotous ranks of dissi-

pation, as did the Greek professor and the poet Savage, at least fifty may be read of, who have renounced their follies and excesses, to worship at the emblazoned shrine of immortality and fame.

But to return: the elements of a good life of happiness and health are, inasmuch as children are implicated, almost wholly in the hands of the parents or of those who bring them up; and the truth of this observation must be evident to every one who has the slightest opportunity of looking into the *arcana* of domestic doings, and appreciating the fruit by the soil and tree from which it springs. A young mind cannot be too soon or too frequently told, that principle, and not impulse, must be its perpetual guide; that impulse is a dangerous although an agreeable companion, and principle a watchful and an ever-guardian friend; that principle is preaching the doctrine, “Do unto others as you would they should do unto you,” upon all occasions; that impulse only advocates its own

gratification, and says, "Do unto others just what pleases you, and give yourself no trouble about the consequences." Children whose tastes and dispositions are suffered to run riot, uncontrolled by reason and good example, soon begin to relish the gross pleasures of animal enjoyment, and nothing else: study, restraint, and occupation, are then considered in the light of punishments, from which they will escape by any subterfuge and manœuvre circumstances may afford; or breaking out into open rebellion, they set at nought all authority, at once to enjoy the sweets of idleness and pleasure, and follow only those paths which lead to repentance and destruction. When this unfortunate turn of mind has obtained the mastery in a young subject, the effects upon the constitution are soon perceived; the morbid excitement into which the nervous system is thrown by the constant seductions of pleasure, renders the frame extremely irritable, and susceptible of every impression; there is an increased expenditure

of the animal energies and supplies going on, and a decreased ratio of productive power to counterbalance the excess.

Pleasure (and the term may be as comprehensive as the reader likes) is in its operation upon young people similar to opium eating, or dram drinking. After a season the usual dose is almost inert: but the habit languishes for the depraved stimulus, and a larger quantity must be imbibed, to arrive at the desired consummation. Reiterated pleasures lose their zest. Those things which at first delighted by their novelty, which took the soul prisoner and "lapped it in Elysium," put off their maiden charms insensibly, and pall every sense. It is a property of the machine that has no remedy, that those functions through which pleasure is obtained become blunted by too great use. Who has not experienced the difference between the first thrills of any gratification, from the apathy of satiety begotten by its abuse? The organs of youth, even in their immaturity, are liable to this law; and the boy or girl

who, from inclination or neglect, has plunged early into the stream of pleasure, soon feels contempt for moderate enjoyments, and is to be satisfied only by the refinements of voluptuousness and iniquity. The waste of constitutional power caused by immorality and successive pleasures, is most injurious, and ultimate mischief, however slow its progress may be, will surely arrive. Symptoms such as these, more or less defined, will be perceived in growing subjects, who abandon themselves entirely to the allurements of pleasure and dissipation of almost every kind: irritability of mind and body, evinced by languor, fretfulness, and muscular weakness; wasting of the flesh; a sallow tinge upon the skin; the eyes sunk, but ever shining with unnatural light; sleepiness, and disinclination to all exertion, except what tends to gratify the fascination which has produced the present mischief; frequent headaches; tremor of the hands, and their veins swollen; morbid perspirations, and depraved appetite. These phenomena, ac-

cording to their intensities, so opposed to the freshness and vigour which appertains to youthfulness, if in continued operation, settle down to absolute atrophy ; or they may give rise to pulmonary consumption, in which latter case the days of the victim are few and numbered.

It may not be expedient to enter more fully into the causes which produce atrophy, from an infringement of the organic law of morals, because the subject would be too diffuse for the nature of this work, and the propriety of discussing a leading influence of this disease more than questionable, by involving details not suited to the fastidious, or even general reader. Suffice it to say, in concluding this section, that the future health and happiness of children will be eminently consulted by parents enforcing, by precept and example, on all occasions the beauty of morality and the deformity of vice, the

“ monster of such hideous mien,
As to be hated needs but to be seen ; ”

and that continued pleasure, however

tricked off by meretricious ornament and feeling, is a dangerous syren, whose proffered cup once tasted, will always be coveted, until irremediable perdition bids them taste no more. So shall they deserve well the encomiums of society, and experience a high reward in the gratitude and affection of their offspring, whose future felicity has been their ceaseless care.

SECT. III.

ATROPHY FROM THE OPERATION OF PARTICULAR TRADES, &c. &c.

In the pursuit of the numerous trading avocations our artificial state of society requires, atrophy is more or less frequently produced. Some trades exert upon the system a pernicious and rapid influence; others appear, from a careful observation, to exert a salutary sway. The diseases which are induced from the operation of trades are more liable to attack adults than children, and this because adults are more exposed than chil-

dren to their evil influence. In the large manufacturing districts of the north, such as Manchester, Leeds, and elsewhere, the health and mortality of children were much affected previous to the late interference of the legislature in their behalf, by the system pursued in the different cotton factories; and that several of the largest fortunes of this enterprising country have been reared, as it were, by the sacrifice of hecatombs of helpless children, is a fact as notorious as it is disgraceful to humanity. The *auri sacra fames* is still as rife as ever. Thousands and thousands of human beings are even now toiling twelve and fourteen hours a day, shut up in miserable manufactories, deprived of proper light and air: others eviscerate the very earth hundreds of feet beneath its surface: and some in floating prisons explore its farthest shores, with only two inches of frail planking between their living bodies and the unfathomable depths of the mysterious sea: and all this that some of their fellow-men, their more fortunate earth-born compa-

nions, may revel in delight, roll in chariots, and bask on silk and gold in perfumed chambers, beneath the canopies of luxury and pride. Providence, however, with its watchful and ever-retributive eye, seems to ordain, that the cherished results arising from the labour of the artizan, and from the hard hands of peasants, shall tend in a great measure to destroy the health and compromise the happiness of those largely possessing them. Satiety follows closely on the heels of attainment, and pleasure is no longer pleasure when it becomes the business of life. Men even now are to be found, audacious enough to advocate the slavery that was once enforced in the cotton factories, and desirous to prove by the logic of self and aggrandizement, that fourteen or sixteen hours a day are by no means too much to keep children at work in a debasing business and a corrupt atmosphere. The great voice of sympathy, however, has prevailed, and excesses which once were common in the many Babel-looking structures of the north, can now but seldom,

and not with impunity, occur. The creative *modus operandi* of spinning-jennies, of fly-wheels, racks, and combs, may not by every one be altogether understood ; but all must know that their constant operation upon any material must tend to throw off a quantity of debris and floating particles from that material ; which being as a matter of necessity inhaled and brought in contact with the delicate fabric of the lungs, cannot fail to prove the foundation of phthisis, atrophy, and diseased action generally. To illustrate the futility of wealth in conferring honour, or even happiness, upon its sons, I subjoin a true story, nearly the whole concluding details of which I personally witnessed.

THE HISTORY OF THE PERTH FAMILY.

Towards the end of the last century, a young Scotsman, who possessed the euphonious name of Peter Perth, his prospects not being of the brightest in his

native clime, set out for the land of the East to seek his fortunes. He took with him an untiring industry, a sound constitution, a slender purse, and a diploma of medicine from St. Andrew's, to assist in his endeavours to grow rich. Arrived in Calcutta, his introductory letters obtained him friends, who promised him protection and preferment; and a vacancy occurring in a short time in the interior of the country, he was nominated to a medical post, where, by attending to the various God-sends of his profession, and some speculations, in a few years he became a wealthy man. He set sail in the vigour of manhood, with all his riches on board. The vessel was lost on the coast, with the greater part of its freight, and Peter Perth reached the British shore almost as poor as he had left it some twenty years previously.

The indomitable spirit of a Scotchman does not yield to trifles; Dr. Perth once more departed for India, and once more realized an immense store of gold.

When nearly sixty years of age, he

perpetrated an act which embittered and poisoned the remainder of his days. He married one of those equivocal consignments to the wedlock market of India, which had scarcely looked upon sixteen summers, beautiful, unprincipled, and proud. Dr. Perth lavished on his young bride the fruits of his good fortune and thrift, and with the blindness of folly fancied his cup of happiness filled to the very brim. Weak man that he was, his terrestrial sorrows had indeed begun. In about three years after this awful misalliance on the part of Dr. Perth, a son was born to him; he broke up his establishment, sold his elephants and howdahs, and safely investing his great wealth, again sailed for his own country. Caledonia always offers attractions to her absent sons; for although she sends them forth unaccommodated, to search for that she cannot give, no mother flatters and fondles her progeny with greater fervour, when returning laden with the Hesperian fruit of more congenial climes. Dr. Perth bought land, and built a house somewhere

by the borders, in which, with his family, he meant to dwell. The conduct of his wife had on many occasions caused him much uneasiness, and her improprieties, now unfettered by the restraints of a better society, by degrees broke through all the obligations of decorum. She formed a liaison with one of the dependents belonging to the establishment, endowed with what her husband lacked, *viz.* youth and vigour, and pursued her follies in the broad face of day. The country people, alive to what was going on, designated the erring pair as the Queen and Bergami, and some derided and some pitied poor Dr. Perth. The outcry at length was intolerable, the family were compelled to abdicate the domain, and with the elements of discord in its bosom, and augmented by a second son, set off for Paris. A Parisian life was not calculated to remedy the wrongs of the old gentleman, or chastise the disposition of Mrs. Perth; and wallowing in wealth, and almost abandoned by decency, she pursued her infatuation, regardless of the re-

monstrances of her husband. Several years had now gone by, and the elder son, conseious of the dishonour of his mother and the injuries of his father, failed not, upon every oeeasion, to express his indignation by word and deed, at that infamy practised by his maternal parent almost hourly before his eyes. The house was beeome a seene of tumult and domestic misery, from the perpetual quarrels between the mother and the son ; and the hapless Dr. Perth, overwhelmed with sorrow and disgrae, had no alternative but to retire to some private room, and ponder on the folly he had committed, in marrying a young creature, abandoned by every virtue which should adorn the female breast. It was at length determined to send what Mrs. Perth termed her rebellious son to England, and a gentleman at Croydon, for a high annual eonsideration, consented to receive him as a pupil, and initiate him in those learned mysteries to which the youth had been hitherto a total stranger. But bad example had done every thing to vitiate the

originally good heart of the young Peter Perth ; the irksomeness of books was unbearable ; the excitement of horses, dogs, and expensive pleasures delightful to his undisciplined mind. Thus ignorance and ardent feelings conspired to hasten the catastrophe of his forthcoming perdition. He had formed an intimacy, unknown to his preceptor, with a female in his aunt's house near London ; and inducing her to leave her situation (she nothing loth), he divided the whole of his time between her, his horses, and his dogs. The misguided youth *now* took another step towards his fate, more important than any he had hitherto achieved ; he married the young person already spoken of, by public banns at St. Giles's church, and the heir to a fortune, amounting nearly to a quarter of a million sterling, actually appeared at the altar, to perform the most solemn of all moral obligations, habited in the costume of a low groom, accompanied by his equestrian and other friends, correspondingly adorned. The news of this luckless marriage was not long in reaching

Paris. The youth was commanded home, where a torrent of invective awaited him from his mother, whose indignation surpassed on this occasion the usual violence of women labouring under offended pride. The young Mrs. Perth followed her husband, as fast as possible, to the capital asylum of mischief for all Europe, and of course met with that reception from the ill-starred family she had shocked by her assurance, which promised any thing but forgiveness or after-felicity. The new-married pair were forbidden to enter the sumptuous hotel of their parents, and were banished to a humble apartment at Passy, while legal opinions were sought as to the possibility of dissolving the marriage, on the plea of minority, &c. The doctors, learned in the law of wedlock, decided that the union was fast, and that the bonds of the church had become in this case indissoluble, until unloosed by death. A truly foolish and womanly proposition was now started by the elder Mrs. Perth, which had for its basis the entire personal separation of the young people, and the

allowance of an annuity to the wife, as long as she would keep aloof from intercourse with her son. Continual threats on the part of Mrs. Perth, that utter disinheritance should ensue if this plan was not complied with, brought about its adoption. The junior Mrs. Perth, now large in the family way, was dispatched to England, in the care of a sort of nurse, with directions to go to her mother's house, in Sussex, and there abide. This accomplished, night and day the old gentleman was assailed by his iniquitous partner, to revoke his will, and make such disposition of his property as to her seemed good.

Dotage and ill health were not calculated to resist the importunities of a wife, urged to her machinations by all sorts of tumultuous passions. On the confines of eternity, and in direct contradiction to the opinion of his medical attendants, Dr. Perth was placed in his travelling carriage, and hurried off for London, where his presence was necessary to the framing of a new will, such as Mrs. Perth demanded. Death frustrated this atroci-

ous scheme: the unfortunate old man with difficulty reached Beauvais, and died the same night in one of its hotels. The body was afterwards brought to England, and accompanied by the two sons and some members of the family, conveyed to the north by one of the steamers, to its final home. Thus, then, with regard to the will, matters remained as they originally stood. The deed was read in due time: its provisions fixed the majority of the two sons at twenty-five, and ordered an allowance of 500*l.* per annum to each of them until that period, when they were to become possessed respectively of upwards of 100,000*l.*; Mrs. Perth to enjoy a separate jointure of two thousand per annum. If the sons died without issue, the whole of the property to revert to any offspring of an unprovided former daughter, one Mrs. ——, born to Dr. P. in India; but otherwise, no fortune was, and unjustly so, allotted to her.

The accumulator of all this prodigious wealth was scarcely in his grave, ere it was manifest to how little good purpose

he had toiled, and by his will applied it. The elder Mrs. Perth took up her quarters at a fashionable hotel in Bond Street, and, in an open carriage with four horses, coursed the streets of London, that all might see her woe and weeds and mourning liveries. After sufficiently enjoying this vulgar ambition, she took a house in Harley Street, where, still pursuing her reckless follies, she terminated a short life, by increasing doses of brandy and laudanum, in which she had for years indulged; richly meriting to have her shamelessness chiselled indelibly on her tomb, and her abandoned death-bed made a byeword and a warning for ever to all infamous wives.

The younger son, John, now master of his own actions, and tainted with all the vices of his mother, plunged headlong into the depths of blackguardism, associating with low grooms and Jews, and every thing that was base and degrading; his career was consequently brief: almost always drunk, and his person disfigured with bruises and falls by encounters with

the rabble, he breathed his last at Calais ere he had attained his twenty-second year, in a state of unconsciousness, without a relative or friend to close his eyes. A high legal authority, speaking of him, has said, “He certainly does appear to have been one of the most wretched young men one has ever heard described: well born without a single decent habit, well connected without one respectable companion, the young son of a widowed mother without any appearance of feeling or affection.”

The next victim to dissipation in this wretched family was the eldest son, Peter, by whose death the line becomes extinct, and its large fortune left a prey to the law, and greedy disputants.

Upon the demise of his father, the young man took a furnished cottage at Hampstead, brought home his wife, and evinced other symptoms of reform, and of leading a new life, which cheered the hopes of his best friends. The change, however, endured but for a season; his mind clouded by the direst ignorance,

and his temperament yielding to every impulse, would not be satisfied with domestic enjoyment. Mrs. Perth, too, from want of determination and a vigorous perception, failed in exercising that healthful influence over her husband's dexterous character, which a reflecting and an accomplished wife would soon have seen to be possible, and replete with the happiest results.

The interest of her situation, and the prospect of her soon becoming a mother, and continuing the name of Perth, failed also to effect a more fortunate consummation. The commencement took place, and a fine formed but still-born child was what it produced. Necessity, in this as in other instances, appeared to be busily occupied in overwhelming for ever, every hope of regenerating the miserable family. Mr. Perth, by the death of his mother, succeeded to considerable available property: all the magnificent furniture, brought at an immense cost from Paris, the family plate, jewels, &c. came into his possession, and the sale of part of

these, enabled him to launch forth in all kinds of extravagance and riot. New horses, a sporting carriage, and fighting dogs, were bought, and alliances formed with those nuisances of society which deal and delight in bang-up, out-and-out, and tally-ho villainies. Hampstead was abandoned, and some premises taken in Clerkenwell, over the gates of which, in large letters, were to be seen “Peter Perth, horse dealer.” The beauties of this vocation were hardly tasted, before Mr. Perth had a most palpable visit from the green-eyed monster, and dire was the commotion that its presence caused to the parties implicated.

Violent language and recrimination now ensued constantly between Mr. and Mrs. Perth; and in the height of these domestic jarrings and jealous fears, they retired for a season to Chichester, therc to experience increased disgrace. At Goodwood races, Mr. Perth encountered a female of imposing appearance but lost character, whose parents were of the lowest class residing in the neighbourhood.

An illicit intercourse was begun with this disciple of Venus, and carried on with unblushing impudence by both, to the great scandal of the whoretown ; Mr. Perth frequently exhibiting his brazen lady seated by his side, while driving four in hand, dressed in the extremity of superfluous fashion. The very boys at length hooted this violation of propriety ; Mr. Perth was almost hissed out of the city ; and leaving his wife behind him, he repaired again to London, accompanied by his frail entraller. Under her influence and direction, a perpetual course of riot and dissipation was entered upon, almost unparalleled, and Vauxhall, the theatres, masquerades, and iniquitous saloons, were in their turns nightly resorted to by the insane pair ; Mr. Perth getting to bed before daylight scarcely ever, and then stupidly drunk. The heavy expenses incurred by these and other outrageous acts were making considerable havoc with Mr. Perth's purse : the executors to the will, according to its provisions, allowing him but five hundred pounds per annum,

until his majority occurred. Some persons, however, came forward to disembar-
rass the prodigal by a loan of several thou-
sand pounds, prudently insuring his life
previously to a large amount in one of the
London offices (and a rash insurance on
the part of the directors it certainly was).
Mr. Perth went on with his fooleries and
debauchery with a persevering madness.
Ulcerated lungs at length supervened to
repeated colds, and a wretched death ter-
minated his earthly course, at a neigh-
bouring town in Surrey, before his twenty-
fifth year, leaving the insurance offices to
pay the full policy, to the tune of several
thousand pounds. Upon the death of the
misguided man, a general spoliation took
place by the low persons at the time living
with him, and a lion's share of money and
very valuable effects was secured by the
Chichester courtezan, and some paramour
she had contrived to introduce to
Mr. Perth's notice in the garb of a gen-
tleman. The widow, who had continued
to live apart from her husband, after-
wards brought this party to Bow Street,

on a charge of felony ; when it was ascertained that property, consisting of jewels, money, and plate, to the amount of some thousands of pounds, had been secreted and carried off. The charge, however, was not made good, the woman declaring that all things found in her possession were Mr. Perth's free gifts, she putting in a paper to prove her case. Now I think the futility of wealth, as a means to an end, in affording happiness, where education and virtue are wanting, were never more strikingly displayed than in this little domestic tragedy ; and hundreds of persons who know the facts, have a great moral lesson presented to them in these deplorable results, which only recently transpired.

SECT. IV.

DELETERIOUS INFLUENCE OF OTHER TRADES.

Many other occupations besides the fabric of cotton, silk, and worsted, exert a baneful influence upon the human

health, producing a gradual wasting of flesh, and other atrophoid symptoms. Millers, glass-grinders, stone-cutters, sweeps, needle-pointers, and knife and fork grinders, are perhaps the greatest sufferers from the pursuit of an unfortunate craft, and the violation of organic laws; the needle, knife, and fork grinders, are a particularly hapless race, and seldom live beyond thirty-five or forty, tormented day and night with difficulty of breathing, and a killing cough. Various methods have been put in practice to absorb and prevent the minute particles of steel being inhaled by the breath, but hitherto nothing has succeeded practically. One of the last and most ingenious experiments was, the use of a magnetized' wire mask covering the whole of the face, and through the apertures of which the workman was to breathe; but it was found, that in addition to the expense of the article, in a very short time the apertures of the mask got completely blocked up by the attraction of the magnetic influence, and that the instrument must

be removed, or the workman suffocated for want of air. Of all the vile callings the artizan fills for the gratification of the rest of the world, the steel-grinding is the worst, for over the cough, emaciation, and misery of the sufferer, medicine can have but little influence, and death must cut him down in the midst of life, surrounded, perhaps, by an afflicted wife and wretched children. When disease, and especially atrophy, has set in from the exercise of any particular avocation, two things must be mainly attended to for the promotion of a cure: one is, to attack the complaint in its early stage; and the other to remove the patient entirely away from the morbid influence: unless the latter is done without any reservation, all curative attempts will prove wholly fruitless. The pulmonary apparatus is, of all the tissues of the body, from its peculiar office, perhaps the most irritable: and it is from this circumstance, and the important functions it is destined to fulfil, and its never-ceasing employment, that disease is so difficult to combat when once

established in these breathing quarters. The indications of cure are, an immediate removal from the noxious locality or occupation; the moderating inflammatory action by small repeated losses of blood, by counter-irritation applied to external surfaces, by warm clothing, and antiphlogistic regimen. The internal administration of the digitalis, or foxglove, under the guidance of a judicious practitioner (in all pneumonic inflammations), is perhaps (although an old remedy) one of the best of any class.

CHAP. VIII.

THE HEALTHY INFLUENCES OF SOME LOCALITIES, TRADES, & PROFESSIONS.

THERE are several avocations, that, instead of promoting disease, have a manifest tendency to promote health and longevity; particular districts of our enormous capital appear to enjoy almost an exemption from certain diseases; and this can only be referred to the carrying on upon a large scale of those businesses most conducive to health in those districts. Tanners, curriers, soap and horseflesh boilers, butchers, and the people employed in large sugar factories, are a particularly healthy tribe; and, *pari passu*, we find that the classic ground appertaining to Whitechapel, Mile End, and the Borough of Southwark, are favoured spots. Tan-

ners, and the people residing within the reach of the aroma of their pits, are of all the population of London those who are most exempt from the vile scourge phthisis, and the visitations of fever. A tanner once told me, that out of a body of men varying from fifty to a hundred employed in his master's yard, he never knew one afflicted for any time with severe cough ; and as for dying of consumption, he had only heard of the disease in quarters he was not accustomed to visit. If his statement be true, something very inimical to the disorder must belong to skins and bark, and the *materiel* which tanners use. Shakspeare says a dead “ tanner will last you nine year.” Butchers are also less amenable to disease generally than the followers of many trades : this may arise from their business keeping them a good deal in the open air, and the vigorous diet they employ ; but the followers of many trades consume a vast deal of nourishing food, and live long in the open air, without being at all remarkable for superior health and vigour.

Take, for instance, the coalheavers, stone-masons, and undertakers of this metropolis. Many situations within the mighty boundaries of London are assuredly more salubrious than others; and were one asked to name them, it might be said, the whole line of the Mile End and Commercial roads, various parts of the Borough in the vicinity of St. George's church, the Blackfriars' road, Hyde Park Corner, and Cumberland Gate especially are healthy localities. Many people have an erroneous notion that *all* the west end of London is so much more salubrious than the east, arguing perhaps from its gentility (that fleeting phantom which we all pursue), but it is a foolish fallacy in the winter and spring months, when the atmosphere is dense and oppressive, and the cold north-east winds prevailing, all the debris from the countless chimneys of the city, and other floating effluvia, are wafted by the direction of those gentle gales towards the west, when it falls very quietly into fashionable quarters, to the manifest prejudice of all who abide therein.

INFLUENCE OF PROFESSION.

As the influence of vocation has been already spoken of in the promotion of health, it may, in pursuance of the subject, be observed, that numerous professions are highly conducive to longevity and enjoyment of life; and amongst them, none more so than what is deemed the harrassing life of an actor: any person taking a retrospective or present view of the stage, will find striking evidence of this fact. Macklin died after attaining his hundredth year; John Kemble, with all the elements of a feeble constitution, lived to a good old age; as did his sister, Mrs. Siddons. Garrick, a little man, and labouring under an infirmity, lived to sixty-three or sixty-four; and Munden, with all his misery, to nearly eighty. At the present time there are Charles Kemble, Braham, Young, and Liston, that mountain of comicality, all verging fast towards that period which is allotted unto the race of man, still in the enjoyment of

their almost pristine energies. It is no answer to the position for any one to object, that George Cooke and Kean and Incledon died early. The only wonder is such livers lived so long; for surely upon any but the mimic stage, their careers would not have been so lasting. Clergymen, university teachers, thriving auctioneers, and those who disburden themselves of long orations in the cause of loyalty or liberty, enjoy pre-eminent vigour. Where, for instance, is there a gentleman more hale and capable, from “Dan to Beersheba,” than the great arch-agitator, or one who wears the livery of his darling island with so much ease and nonchalance? The secret of all this lies in the continuous and powerful exercise of the lungs; and whether a man blows a trumpet, talks from a pulpit, delivers long lectures upon science, or expounds the crude mysteries of the law in some blessed court of contention, the effect is good (at least to himself). Thus much then for the *vox et preterea nihil.*

CHAP. IX.

SECT. I.

ATROPHY ARISING FROM COLD, DEFICIENT FOOD AND RAIMENT, &c. &c.

THE depressing power of cold is also one among the many beginnings of atrophy, as also the great promoter of consumption. Children and feeble persons, from delicate organization or languid power in the heart, are especially liable to the ravages of cold.

Cold acts detrimentally upon the system in two leading ways: one is, the direct abstraction of the body's heat; the other, the repelling of the blood from the surface, and throwing it as a consequence upon the more important and internal parts. The natural heat of the

healthy body is far above the atmosphere in which we live, and ranges, according to situation, from 86° to 104° of Fahrenheit. The greatest heat is found in the thorax, and that because heat is there generated by the combination of the oxygen of the air with the carbon of the blood: the heat eliminated by nutrition also tends to preserve the high temperature of the body.

From the unprovided state in which we enter the world and continue, as to a natural defence from the cold, clothing becomes absolutely necessary; and if, from poverty or neglect, a due quantity is not supplied, disease ensues. Atrophy, when it arises from continued cold, is always a serious affair, and is apt to run into a partial or entire obstruction of the chyliferous powers. This form of the disorder is very common in London, and indeed all large cities, where the various fluctuations of fortune and want of employment subject considerable masses of the lower orders to privation or exposure

in inelement weather. Nature's great poet has well described their case from the mouth of the mad king.

" Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er ye are,
That bide the pelting of the pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides
Sustain this shock ? your raggedness defend ye
From seasons such as these ?"

Persons suffering under atrophy from cold have ever a most piteous appearance. The countenance is shrunk and pale, the tarsi of the eyes more or less everted, and blood red. The extremities livid and swollen, and the teeth chattering from spasm. A condition like this of course cannot endure, so that if some speedy relief is not afforded, the miserable sufferer crawls to an accustomed haunt, and there perishes, unfriended and alone. The good Samaritan, desirous of relieving this common source of atrophy, and who has the means, will find abundance of opportunities, and he need hardly be told, that the remedies required, are clothing, fire, and food.

SECT. II.

ATROPHY ARISING FROM BAD AND DEFECTIVE
FOOD, &c.

This, like the last described, must always be present, more or less, in crowded populations, and in extreme cases the symptoms are pretty much the same, or worse. Different degrees of the disorder exist, in proportion to the potentiality of the exciting causes. In times of scarcity, such as now and then happen from failure of the potato crop, whole districts in Ireland suffer, and are nearly depopulated by the ravages of this disease and typhus. Any population, which depends for its support upon vegetable matter, is an unhappy and ailing population, and the squalid looks of the sufferers evince the fact, as painfully as the repeated presence of disease. One of the most benevolent and enlightened legislators of France, Baron Dupin, has long been endeavouring to remedy this evil among the French peasantry, and indeed the great class of the working people. The small portion

of animal matter, which the poorer sort of French can procure for their bodies' sustenance, is most lamentable, and is productive (as deteriorating the moral and physical forces of the people) of egregious mischief to the best interests of France. It is calculated, from statistic data, that the consumption of beef and mutton in that land, balancing the population of the two countries, is something less than one sixth of England's. The dinners of the French ouvriers, such as are found in the second and third rate towns of that country, rarely consist of any thing beyond (more especially in the summer) a large piece of the coarsest and brownest looking bread, with a lettuce or some fruit, and this diluted with some sour cider, or miserable wine and water. The continental traveller must have, over and over again, seen these brave and unsophisticated men, standing about three or four o'clock in the day at their respective doors, munching their sorry repast, listening to some patriotic air. It is a sad truth, that the agricultural labourers and small farmers

in France live nearly all the year round upon bread, and the different sorts of pulse, seldom or never getting a good soup, or a nourishing piece of meat. The consequence of this wretched sustenance is, a wearing down of the powers and physical forces of the body, and the production of a species of atrophy. The great and chivalrous Fourth Henry of France is reported to have said, “that he hoped to live and be the means of placing a pullet in every Frenchman’s pot, one day, at least, in every week.” The sentiment does the monarch honour, doubtless ; but his subjects would have been in those days, as now, much more improved by the repeated introduction to the *pot au feu* of the flesh of beeves. Had Napoleon been taught to feed his hastily levied legions upon beef, instead of the watery soup maigre of France, he would have had the greater chance of gaining the battle of Waterloo. One of our generals has remarked, that “the best troops in the world are, an Irishman half drunk, a Scotchman half starved, and an English-

man with his belly full." Indeed, John Bull with his belly full, is a redoubtable personage, at all times and in all places.

SECT. III.

ATROPHY CAUSED BY THE INNUTRITIOUS DIET OF CHEAP SCHOOLS.

Children at cheap schools, managed by improper masters and mistresses, suffer frequently from a subdued kind of atrophy, arising from their scanty and improper food. Many nauseous compounds are placed upon that long hungry piece of deal, called the school room dining table, which would, without exaggeration, nauseate the stomach of any ploughboy. Do not some of my readers remember that abominable mass, known to school-boys by the appropriate name of damper, or stick-jaw, and still shudder at the thought? This stick-jaw, which is literally nothing but flour and water, and huge pellets of suet, boiled together in the likeness of a pudding, is brought on imprimis, as a

mediating power, to negotiate between the empty croaking stomach and the forthcoming joint: it hardly ever fails in its office. Seriously speaking, atrophy is engendered very often, in young subjects, by the hard fare of schools. In the season of youth, it has already been declared, that a large and continuous supply of food is necessary for the well-being of the subject, and all sorts of maladies and debilities will spring up, should it be withheld. Good food and plenty of exercise are imperative for the welfare of young people. The latter is strangely neglected in the seminaries of young ladies. It has been observed by some old physician, that "he never saw a file of school girls, marching two and two, with their mute, sorrowful faces, without the unpleasant idea of a funeral procession crossing his mind." A boy or girl, who comes home for the holidays with a pale countenance and emaciated limbs, or protuberant abdomen, should ever awaken the anxiety of the parent, and on no account should be sent back to the accustomed quarters, if at all,

while such symptoms exist. That many excellent and trustworthy establishments are to be found for the instruction and nurture of youth, is beyond all doubt; as there are many and excellent remedies to be found in the chemist's shop for the improvement and prolongation of life: but to deny that irremediable mischief and ill health are often to be traced to promiscuous schools, would be as absurd as to deny that a nauseous and detrimental draught, if sought for, was not to be had in the usual asylum of "green earthen pots and old cakes of roses," and to deny the evidence of one's senses,

SECT. IV.

ATROPHY OF BEGGARS.

Atrophy and its consequences from deficient food, are to be met with in all their appalling forms amongst the very poor and destitute classes to be seen wandering about the streets of London. There the comfortable disciples of optimism may

behold beggars, match vendors, bone hunters, and ballad singers, in their countless shapes and ragged varieties, presenting different intensities of the disease; and it may be safely affirmed, that not one out of twenty of this ill-starred race, which the philanthropic man may notice, is entirely free from it. The cravings of hunger in such poor creatures being constantly unsatisfied, they find a temporary and glowing relief in the pernicious excitement which gin produces; and consequently the hard-earned and often-solicited penny is bartered for the fiery fluid, and ruin generally follows the draught.

That bedizened Pandemonium with burning crescents called a Gin Palace, and costing often in its building up thousands of pounds (like Milton's mansion for the devil, a receptacle for all bad spirits), is mainly supported by the abject poor; and while the owners grow rich by the small but incessant profits it produces, it deals out death and misery in all directions to its frequenters.

SECT. V.

ATROPHY ARISING FROM EXCESSIVE EVACUATIONS.

All profuse or repeated evacuations are notoriously injurious to the animal economy, and the sure precursors of disease. The most common are, perspiration, purging, loss of blood, diabetes or immoderate loss of urine, expectoration, giving suck too long, and venereal excess. These, in their different extremes, produce strongly-marked cases of the disease under consideration.

It is perhaps needless to inform any reader, that perspiration is a vapour given off by the extremities of the cutaneous arteries upon the surface of the body, and that it is insensible and sensible; the former being that almost imperceptible vapour which is constantly escaping, and the latter that vapour in excess, collecting upon the surface in the form of little drops. The insensible and pulmonary transpiration amounts in quantity to

about five or six pounds in the twenty-four hours, and it is only when that quantity is excessively increased, that diseased action is the consequence. Great muscular exertions, hot clothing, warm weather, and debility, are the exciting causes of immoderate transpiration. The pernicious effects of inordinate action on the skin are frequently evident in individuals residing in hot climates, such as the East Indies; as also in jockeys, who by artificial means sweat themselves down to given weights, for the purposes of racing, and thus lay the foundations of disease. Whenever great perspiration is induced from slight causes, such as the ordinary exertions and vicissitudes of every-day life, something wrong is going on in the system. Nutrition and idleness are too much courted, or fatigue and depletion too sedulously pursued. The latter, which is generally the cause of this description of debility, may run it on to confirmed atrophy, if not arrested in its march.

PURGING.

Protracted, and too frequent alvine secretion, produces a great emaciation and debility: it originates in many causes, suppressed perspiration, the improper use of cathartics, vitiated matter or weakness in the alimentary canal, &c. In some individuals it forms a distinct disease, and continues in spite of all intervention, until the most dangerous atrophied symptoms come on, and sometimes death ensues. As a primary cause of atrophy, excessive purging, however, is rather rare; but symptomatic of other disorders it is most common, as in the last stage of consumption it is the usual harbinger of dissolution: arise from whatever influence it may, its continued action will never fail to engender great bodily distress, and finally atrophy.

LOSS OF BLOOD.

The importance of a due and healthy supply of blood, for the well-being of the whole system, has been in this work re-

peatedly alluded to ; its great influence, however, on the disease under consideration, will justify further observation. The blood is that homogeneous red fluid, of a saltish taste and glutinous consistency, which circulates constantly in the heart, arteries, and veins : its quantity is about twenty-nine pounds in a full grown person, of which the veins contain four parts, and the arteries the other fifth : its colour is red, being florid in the arteries, where it is still oxydized, and dark in the veins, where charged with carbon, excepting only the pulmonary vessels, where these phenomena are reversed, being bright in the veins, and dark in the arteries. Of all the component parts of the animal body, it is the most important.

Many experiments have been made, and arguments adduced by recent philosophers, to prove its actual vitality ; but ingenuity has been more easily apparent, in their researches, than their proofs.

Man, birds, and quadrupeds, are styled hot-blooded animals, in contradistinction to fishes, lizards, and snakes, which are

cold-blooded. Our blood is warmer than the medium we live in: fishes' is of the temperature in which they swim. The odour of blood is peculiar, unlike any other thing; and its taste saltish, from the salts it contains, more especially the muriate of soda, the common salt which we daily use. Its specific gravity rather exceeds that of water, and its temperature ranges about thirty-one degrees of Reaumur, and one hundred and two or three Fahr. Venous blood, when drawn and left to stand, soon separates into two portions; the more solid part, called the crassamentum, sinks in the vessel, and the serum or fluid part surrounds it, or swims at the top; the surface of the crassamentum, in inflammatory diseases, presents a yellowish or buffy coat, and its substance is much firmer than ordinary. Breeding women and rheumatic people usually present this phenomenon. When first drawn, venous blood is very dark; but subjected in the basin to the oxygen of the air, it soon becomes of a more florid red. The component parts of blood

are carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, azote, water, albumen, various salts, iron, and animal matter. Of these bodies, iron constitutes no small proportion, and it has been proved by chemical facts, that there is enough of that substance in the blood of forty-three stout men to make a moderate-sized ploughshare.

Some authors have taken an infinity of pains to prove the presence of small rounded molecules in the blood, and have even ventured to give their size, shapes, and evolutions. Leuwenhoeck says, a thousand millions of these globules are equal to a grain of sand. Haller says, they are to an inch what one inch is to five hundred inches; and others declare, that a globule is but a little bladder which contains many globules; and some assert the blood contains no globules at all.

Where truth is to be found in all this conflicting opinion it is difficult to say: one thing, however, is not so difficult to prove, namely, that the influence of the blood upon the animal system is of the most paramount importance. It distends

the great cavities of the heart and blood-vessels, and prevents their collapse. By its stimulating power it produces contraction of the heart, by which contraction the blood is driven to all parts of the body for its nourishment. It generates within itself the animal heat; and it is the great fountain from which all the secretions are made and thrown off.

The blood is indisputably, then, the most important fluid of the body — the great agent by which the great processes of nutrition and breathing and the elimination of heat are performed. When the chyle, from improper food, noxious air, or disease, is imperfectly changed into blood, the vital phenomena all are prejudiced, and deterioration ensues. Hence originates the squalid spectacle of the starving man; the sunk, sallow countenances of those who breathe perpetually a corrupt air; and the pitiful look of the atrophied or phthisical patient, fast sinking to an eternal rest.

The consistence, colour, and quantity of the blood, varies in various people;

and indeed, a departure from a healthy tone does not produce that alteration in the general health, which its deviation from perfectness (the importance of the agent being considered) would lead one to anticipate.

As there are not two noses or two lips minutely resembling each other, so also are there not two blood masses of two different human beings precisely alike. I have taken blood from a chlorotic patient, which assumed almost immediately in the bleeding basin the appearance of skimmed milk. I have drawn from the arm of one man a thick grumous body, looking like a lump of liver; and from the arm of another a poor diluted fluid, which resolved itself into a quantity of serum, with a contracted buffy-coated coagulum swimming loosely on its top.

From one man blood will flow to the filling of a small washing* basin, and he feels the better for the interference; another falls into a swoon ere you have the sixth ounce, and the operator may run some risk of being stoned by the profane,

for apparently killing his patient. Of the causes which produce these differences in people not absolutely sick, we know but little or nothing; nor do we know why or how the Protean fluid called blood becomes turned in the human body to bile and urine, perspiration and synovia, the saliva and the tears.

If any one line of practice is more generally received amongst medical men than another, it is the necessity of abstracting blood in a very great number of diseases which our flesh is heir to. In the extensive class of inflammatory disorders, it is always more or less indicated. In madness, apoplexy, the beginning of fevers, of phthisis, in cholera, hydrophobia, and even dropsy, and ague, it is advantageously performed: so that the witty Le Sage may be said to have penned but a poor satire upon the healing art, when he made the lancet and hot water the basis of Dr. Sangrado's remedial prescriptions. The ingenious theories of the luckless Dr. Brown are proved to be based in error; and the disciples of his school

(if any such there be) can hardly escape his misfortunes, and the obloquy which overwhelmed him to pursue his practice. The brandy, laudanum, and beef-steak remedies in acute disease, must meet with few advocates, even in this age of bold measures and decisive treatment.

Hardly any people of any nation bear the loss of blood so well as Englishmen ; and this may be referred at once to their sturdy constitutions and the nutritious diet they consume. The vivacious Frenchman, whose sustenance is derived from thin soup and sour wine, and the idle Italian, who feeds on maccaroni and basks perpetually beneath a southern sun, would rapidly sink, if depleted to the extent that many British subjects are in our hospitals for every-day complaints. The pulse being weak is by no means a reason why blood should not in numerous cases be freely drawn. Every good practitioner is aware that in enteritis, or inflammation of the bowels, it is remarkably so ; and that it rises even while the blood flows. In some head cases it is hardly percepti-

ble, but the fluid must nevertheless be taken, to effect a cure. Indeed, of the pulse a grave physician has well said, "*Res fallacissima est.*"

An obtuse country practitioner was attending a case of violent fever, which he had the talent to prognosticate would degenerate into typhus. He was therefore desirous of preserving all the blood he could for after-emergencies. Nothing would induce him to bleed; so that fierce delirium coming on, the patient very wisely bled himself; for in the absence of the doctor he seized a knife, which fortunately lay in his way, and inflicting an immense gash in the front of his neck, lost at least two quarts of blood, and thus he literally cured his fever by cutting his throat, and soon recovered from the wound.

The sudden abstraction of an unlimited quantity of blood, such as would ensue from the division of the carotid or femoral artery, where the latter emerges from the groin, causes speedy death. An individual so situated, would not survive perhaps more than a minute and a half or

two minutes from the first division of the vessel. Arterial blood is of more importance than venous, and its undue waste is productive of greater mischief.

The phenomena and sudden deaths which ensue from an attack of the Asiatic cholera are referable only to a continuous and large discharge of the serum of the blood; but by what mysterious agency this is brought about, will perhaps never be precisely known. There is no question that some essential alteration takes place in the atmosphere, and that the blood is subjected to that malign power in the air cells of the lungs, whence it is propelled through the arterial channels, encumbered with the morbid poison. My opinion is, that the vital fluid becomes suddenly and morbidly enriched, and altered in its qualities by a specific atmospheric or electric change, as is shown by the disease following the course of rivers, or particular sides of a street; and that the system, unprepared for such an unusual mutation, endeavours to disburden itself of part of its blood, in the minute anastomosing branches of the circulation, which are

partly situated in the long line of the alimentary canal, and that the thinnest part of the blood, the serum, is consequently that which is most easily extravasated or thrown off from the excited vessels; and that (following the idea) the whey-like matter which is discharged from the stomach and bowels, in Asiatic cholera, is decidedly the serum of the blood.

This theory of an atmospheric stimulation I have not met with, but its novelty may not be its only recommendation. Should the thought be worthy reconsideration, are not, first, the large abstractions of blood, which are sometimes so successfully adopted in the beginning of the disease, confirmatory of its origin? Secondly, are not the activity and luxuriance of the vegetable world, in a cholera season, indicative that some great and promoting power is working in the air. And thirdly, does not the disease, attacking chiefly the enfeebled part of a community, such as the rice-fed Hindoos, in preference to the hale and vigorous, also strengthen the supposition? (For it is

well known to every properly instructed practitioner, that the weak are the most incapable of supporting a sudden and inordinate stimulus.) Fourthly, are not the good effects of large doses of calomel and opium explained, by their setting up a new action to counteract the morbid one? And lastly, is not the frightful feature, the dark blue colour of the skin, explained, by the serum abandoning the mass of the blood, and leaving the crino or thick part of the blood behind, in the thread-like vessels immediately under the surface, stagnant and motionless, from its density and gravity, and thus producing the discolorization and coldness, those harbingers of death?

Admitting that the exciting cause of cholera is an undue stimulus imparted to the blood in the air cells of the lungs, by an unexplained change of the atmosphere, or electricity, and that the circulating medium is, as it were, surprised by the inroad of an enemy, and endeavours to dislodge him in the manner described; then are the phenomena and fatality of this wondrous

and inscrutable pest, as also the *modus operandi* of its cure (when it takes place) somewhat accounted for. Of all the morbid actions, cholera is that which produces the most appalling atrophy in the shortest space of time. For what is atrophy but a deprivation and abandonment of the powers of life, comparative or increased?

An individual, attacked with true cholera, is sensible at first of pain and tenderness over the whole region of the abdomen; then follow purging and sickness, accompanied by an increase of pain and alarming debility. As the disease progresses, the weakness becomes more and more intense, and quickly deprives the patient of all voluntary power; the voice sinks down to a whisper, and the natural warmth of the tongue to an icy coldness. Spasmodic contractions take place in the extremities, more especially in the calves of the legs. These symptoms acquiring force, the face turns deadly pale, or almost of a leaden hue, the eyes are deep sunk in their orbits, and surrounded by a

dark halo; the skin now partially presents the fatal blue tinge, and the coldness of death itself pervades the whole frame: the patient at last sinks into total syncope, and dies, frequently without a struggle or a groan, and this sometimes in one or two hours from the beginning of the attack.

The professional world being so unsettled as to the best modes of relieving this dreadful scourge, it is not worth while to enter into the different modes and different systems propounded by physicians for its cure; and these remarks upon cholera are concluded by observing, that every moment is of vital importance, in attempting your remedies at the onset of the disease, and that waste of time is only the wasting of the patient's life.

Those evacuations of blood from the system, which are the most likely to produce atrophy, arise generally from the rupture of one or more of the small internal vessels; and from their size or number, of course, are influenced the amount of the discharge and the peril of the subject.

SECT. VI.

ATROPHY FROM OTHER LOCAL EVACUATIONS.

When atrophy is induced by the undue waste of the particular secretions in diabetes, giving suek too long, or venereal excess, the remedy will be found chiefly in suspending by every possible means these morbid and injurious actions, and by putting the patient on a highly nutritious diet, with tonics, warm sea bathing, and country air. On the two latter wilful and debilitating extravagancies, a very long chapter might be offered; but as one subject appertains rather to the accoucheur, and the other is not a very inviting one to the general reader, it will be better to leave the matter to the good sense and consideration of any party whom such perverse doings may more immediately concern.

CHAP. X.

INDICATIONS OF THE CURATIVE PROCESS IN ATROPHY, AND CASES OF CURE.

ATROPHY, and more especially that description of the disease which is depending upon an arrest of the nutritive functions, is usually somewhat undefined in its approaches, slow in its progress, and even when fully formed, uncertain in its period of fatal termination ; some patients succumbing to the debilitating and other phenomena of the disorder in a short time, and others battling with the most determined symptoms for months, and even years, before renouncing the struggle, reduced at last to the most frightful inanition. The progress of cure, then, in this complaint, as in the greater part of those remarkable for slow formation,

must and ever will be gradual. It is impossible to many, from erroneous opinions respecting the disorder, to cure it at all: it is impossible to every one to cure it by any sudden or violent action upon the system, by medicine or otherwise.

When the right and only truly successful method of relieving the disorder, namely, the normal stimulation of the absorbents and lacteals, and the consequent promotion of the chyle's flow, has been pursued for fourteen or twenty days, a change, if the case is curable, comes on for the better, and many of the most annoying derangements arising out of the peculiar nature of the malady, abate somewhat of their intensity. Of these, the most important and cheering are, first, an altered appearance of the abdominal evacuation, such as the clay-coloured stools to a darkly-streaked or natural hue; and secondly, a suspension of the further waste of flesh. When these two indications are satisfactorily ascertained, the patient, in all human probability, will thoroughly recover; that is, premising

the proper treatment is continued steadfastly and without material change.

An alteration takes place, soon after these favourable dispositions, in the size and appearance of the abdomen, which indeed throughout this complaint presents great differences to the commonest observer; the mesenteric glands being sometimes much enlarged and prominent, and sometimes not morbidly perceived or enlarged at all*.

* "It cannot be concealed, however, that there is necessarily a great variation in the symptoms of the *tabes mesentericus*, from a great variation in the precise seat, as well as in the number and bulk of the glandular enlargements. I have inspected the bodies of a considerable number of patients who died of this disease, from infancy to the middle period of life, and I have never found two cases alike in their symptoms or morbid appearances. For in some instances, as I have ascertained, the disease may consist in an enlargement of only one gland, and yet prove fatal, the body never having any preternatural hardness or swelling; whilst in other cases the number of diseased glands may be countless, and occupy by their bulk a considerable portion of the abdomen. It must also be remembered, that derangement in the organs of digestion is a common cause of the

As the functions of the abdomen return progressively to a healthier and healthier state by the continuous adoption of that system of medicine which has been already found beneficial, so in an equal ratio do the other diseased characteristics settle down to a more legitimate and undisturbed action. If cough has been present (which in some cases is so much so as to induce the belief with many practitioners that the lungs are diseased), it by degrees entirely disappears. The countenance, once the representation of an abominable age, again assumes the inviting look of youthfulness; the lines of disease and distress, and the dark halo of the orbits, no longer being to be seen.

mesenteric disease," [Is it not the disease *sui generis* in almost all its forms?] "the latter supervening upon the former, and occasioning thus an error in our conclusions, as deduced from the result; for both affections being present at the same time, the more fatal disorder may remain after the removal of the other, or both may yield to the medicine which was only prescribed for one of them."—*Practical Observations on Disorders of the Liver and Digestive Organs*, by Joseph Ayre, M. D., pp. 86, 87.

The wailing fretfulness and sleepless nights are replaced by a comparative cheerfulness and increasing flow of spirits in the day, and sound and refreshing sleep at night. The body becomes every day more and more filled out, and muscular vigour and exertion return. The appetite appears to be the only bad symptom remaining of the disorder, still demanding a large and almost unceasing supply of food. This, however, is readily explained by the long previous exhaustion and waste of the animal economy, through the starving nature of the malady, now requiring incessantly the results of the restored nutrition. And indeed, although an almost ravenous hunger was one of the leading and worst features of the complaint, evincing that suspension of digestion and nutritive power upon which, in my opinion, is founded the disease, its continuance in a more subdued and healthy form is one of the best and leading indications of returning convalescence; and, in unison with the other welcome symptoms of amendment, a sure and unerring

sign that the stomach and the chyliferous apparatus are again in proper action, and occupied in repairing the mischief which the original and formidable disorder had achieved.

In some of my patients, recovering from the worst phenomena of the illness, I have noticed a peculiar action, which, as far as my reading and experience go, has not hitherto been at all noticed by any medical author or lecturer whatever ; namely, an irritation about the left clavicle, without any breach of the skin or eruption, which seems to solicit the constant scratching and rubbing of the part. If you ask the patient why she is ever scratching her neck, at once she replies, “ It does itch so ! ” and again rubs away. This certainly must be referable to the renewal of action in the thoracic duct, and the chyle’s flow into the vein.

I have hitherto found, that from two to three months is the time usually necessary for the cure of atrophy in young children ; and the first striking symptom of an alleviation of the disease is a more natural

colour and consistence in the stools, the daily improvement of which is a *sine quâ non* in the complete cure of the morbid affection, the other evidences of disturbed function appearing to take their healthy tone entirely from the progressive change which is worked in that particular secretion.

Finally, then, at the expiration of the periods spoken of, I have been able to pronounce all my mesenteric patients perfectly restored, and in the evident enjoyment of a vigorous and sound health. In no single instance has there been a relapse of the disorder where I have had an opportunity of observing the patient's appearance in after-times, or of hearing of such an event, if it had occurred, from the friends.

Thus, then, I have endeavoured, and hope with all fairness succeeded, in describing the usual diseased appearances which characterize atrophy or marasmus, and the causes which predispose to that complaint; and it only remains for me to submit a few more observations and a detail of some cases in which I have been

consulted, where my particular practice has been eminently successful, and rescued many patients from apparently impending death.

CASE I.

MARASMUS CAUSED BY BAD AIR.

In 1831, I was called to attend the son of a working shoemaker, residing in some confined court in the neighbourhood of Aldersgate Street, aged about nine years. He had been previously under the care of Dr. R—, who pronounced the case incurable. The symptoms were, emaciation, enlarged abdomen, and a knotty feel of the mesenteric glands, which resembled so many walnuts to the touch, embedded in the cellular substance of the abdomen, and there was unceasing hunger. The treatment which had hitherto done no good was withdrawn, and that which it is the intention of this work to recommend, the strengthening of the whole nutrient system, substituted. In a

fortnight the symptoms were much mitigated, the hunger was less, and the hardened feeling of the glands disappearing. In less than six weeks the malady was entirely subdued, and the boy in better health than for the previous five years.

It is regretted that the name of this individual is not remembered. He had been on the books of a charitable institution, and was attended by myself *in forma pauperis*. The case, however, was a strongly marked one of perilous atrophy ; but indicated most thoroughly the success of my treatment.

CASE II.

MARASMUS WITH DROPSICAL ENLARGEMENT.

William Edwards, aged sixteen, the son of a gold and silver polisher, living in Clerkenwell, was suffering from dropsy and atrophy. This patient was in a deplorable condition, and when I first saw him the disease was far advanced. Many of the aggravated symptoms of watery in-

filtration were present—tumid belly, puffy legs, and short breathing, along with every manifestation of a total suspension of the chyle in its passage to the thoracic duct. This case, notwithstanding the great prostration of vital power, bore the action of diuretics exceedingly well, the digitalis acting admirably for the relief of the dropsical enlargement. After a week or ten days' preparation, he commenced the medicines for the removal of the mesenteric obstruction, and with every success. They were continued for about the space of two months, at the end of which time I was compelled to go into the country, and saw him not again, leaving him improved in every shape, and progressing to a perfect state of health.

CASE III.

MARASMUS WITH SUPPURATION OF SCROFULOUS GLANDS.

This was the child of a publican named Billing, residing near St. John Street

Road, about three years old, which had been under the care of one Mr. W—, a practitioner of Islington. There was in this case a good deal of scrofulous development, mixed up with decided atrophoid symptoms, and the disease had broken out more than six months before I was called in. Two glands in the neck had inflamed and suppurated, pouring out much offensive matter. The appetite was inconsiderable, but the abdomen, as usual in nearly all the cases, much enlarged. The stools costive and clay-coloured. The proceedings here were all straight forward enough, and nothing interfered with the policy of submitting this little patient to the proper remedies at once. A great improvement took place shortly in the state of the neck, the sores drying up with no external application but plain lint. The ease proved rather obstinate, but finally yielded to my almost infallible modes for the cure of atrophy, when occurring in so young children, in about ten weeks from my first visit. It may be remarked, that in this instance the child

was not seen oftener perhaps than once or twice in a week, being at nurse in the country.

CASE IV.

INCIPIENT MARASMUS AND SCROFULA.

A little girl, three years old, under the charge of a Mrs. Rouse, residing in Ramsgate, was very similarly situated as to the disorder with the one last detailed. A large gland had supplicated in the neck, which discharged considerably, and the abdomen was swollen but soft: appetite natural, and the flesh by no means exhausted. In six weeks the child was perfectly well, and I had the satisfaction of receiving a letter of thanks from the parents when my account was paid. The treatment was by slight mercurial alteratives every night, sponging the whole upper part of the body with salt and water every morning, and the steady administration of a compound powder twice a day, consisting of columbo, rhubarb, bark, and cinnamon, and supporting the strength with full flesh diet and milky drinks. The iron was not requisite.

CASE V.

INFANTILE ATROPHY FROM TOTAL SUSPENSION OF
THE CHYLIFEROUS SYSTEM.

I was sent for in great haste to attend the infant of a Mrs. Drayson, living also in Ramsgate, which was reported to me to be dying. Nothing in the worst form of disease could surpass the miserable condition of this little object. I found it in a strong fit, with the bowels acting in liquid gushes as the spasms came on. It was fourteen months old, but appeared nearly stationary as to its increase a few weeks from its birth. The symptoms of infantile atrophy were perhaps never more intensely displayed than in this case. Here were perpetual hunger, purging, crying, inability to sleep, and frightful emaciation. Previous to my seeing the child, the mother told me it had been under the care of Dr. C—, of Canterbury, from which city she had but recently arrived, and that he had abandoned the case as utterly hopeless.

I ordered the child immediately into a warm bath, and prescribed cretaceous mixture and syrup of white poppies in combination, to be given every three hours, with the double intention of arresting the purging and procuring some sleep. The next morning I found sleep had been partially obtained, but there was little remission of the diarrhœa.

Convinced that all the symptoms which harrassed this little subject arose from the confirmed atrophy, and that to set the chyle flowing was the only chance it had of its life, I resolved at once to begin my plan, alternating the medicines with an opiate, to check the looseness, which continued troublesome. And here, as it is a case in point, I will take leave to observe, that, in my belief, the non-success of the generality of medical men in the treatment of this disease, originates in their abandoning a particular system, to avoid collision with those phenomena and derangements which spring solely from the complaint itself; or, in other words, in

withholding the remedies for the cure of atrophy, because fever, headache, and restlessness are present, they withhold the only means of subduing it in its stronghold, bothering themselves, in vain, to hunt down the consequences, *viz.* the fever, the headache, and the restlessness, while the root of all the disturbance remains where it was. But to continue: a fortnight had barely elapsed before there was a marked amendment in all the symptoms—the crying ceased, the purging stopped, the craving stomach was appeased. It would be unnecessary to describe the gradations of the ease from day to day, for the period of eight or nine weeks, during which time the original treatment was implicitly followed. Suffice it to say, at the end of that time, the infant was perfectly restored, re-made, as it were, from head to foot, and cutting several teeth. This ease was more satisfactory and pronounced than any that had occurred to me, and its cure created much sensation amongst those people ac-

quainted with the facts. The mother, I believe, still resides in the town, and could corroborate every particular here advanced.

CASE VI.

ATROPHY IN AN INFANT FROM DEFECTIVE PARENTAGE.

This case occurred at Paris, in the infant child of Mrs. H—, an English lady living in the Rue Ponthieu. This was also a severe form of acute atrophy, but arising from what cause I could not exactly learn. Probably there was some constitutional defect from the mother, who had been deprived of the use of her limbs many years, and moved only upon crutches. The leading feature of this case was woful emaciation, and the countenance resembling some ugly old woman's, that might be found in the streets of Paris, where such faces especially abound.

This cure was perfected in less than six weeks.

CASE VII.

MARASMUS WITH RICKETS.

I was called to attend the little son of a Mrs. Evans, the widow of the head groom of the present King of France, suffering from atrophy and rickets. This patient had been ill for twelve months, and had all the usual symptoms of the two combined maladies. I was called in by accident to attend him, and immediately put him under treatment. The disease, in this instance, was rather obstinate, and did not yield so rapidly as in some other cases. Nevertheless, the efficacy of the medicines was not very long in developing itself, and I had the satisfaction of adding this to the other cases. When my attendance ceased, the curvature of the legs was fast giving way, and the boy able to run about the streets of Paris.

CASE VIII.

MARASMUS FROM DEFICIENT TRANSMISSION OF CHYLE.

The youngest son of —— Fox, Esq. of the Rue l'Archeveque, had been for some

time declining in health, without any evident or known cause. The secretions from the bowels were very loose and viti- ated, and the system, in consequence, a good deal reduced. The appetite was very slight, countenance pale and bloated, bad nights, and much fretfulness. This was a case of incipient mesenteric obstruc- tion. The chyle most probably was intercep- ted in its passage through the me- senteric glands, and could not arrive at the thoracic duct completely for the body's sustenance.

The case was adapted exactly for the treatment, and recovered most perfectly in every sense. In addition to the usual plan, I ordered the belly to be rubbed every morning, for ten minutes, with warm water, in which a handful of salt had been dissolved.

CASE IX.

ATROPHY ARISING FROM CURVATURE OF THE SPINE.

The daughter of Lady K —, of the Champs Elysées, eleven years old, had

been suffering a considerable period from debility, with curvature of the spine. For the latter complaint she had been long under a Frenchman, who professed to remedy such mischief. During his treatment, from an unusual accession of feebleness, some atrophoid symptoms came on; and I being consulted, in conjunction with another medical friend, was compelled to suspend those gymnastic exercises she had been going through for the deranged spine, and put her under my course. All that I expected to do in this case was accomplished, namely, the relief of the debility and declining symptoms. Of course the curvature of the back remained where it was. It was never supposed medicine would rectify that.

CASE X.

UNMIXED ATROPHY FROM MESENTERIC OBSTRUCTION.

The daughter of Captain B —, nine years of age, had been in a declining state of health for some time, and various physicians in Paris had been consulted for her relief, amongst whom were Pro-

fessor Margellon, Dr. C—, Dr. M—, and Dr. H—. In consequence, I believe, of the very unfavourable opinion of these gentlemen, I was consulted, the success which had attended my particular treatment having reached the father's ears.

Upon seeing the young lady, I made a provision with her friends, that the case should be left entirely to me, which was acceded to. All the symptoms were highly aggravated, and denoted a strongly marked case of decline, from mesenteric obstruction. There were terrible emaciation, enlarged and hard abdomen, hunger, perpetual wailing, flushed cheek, and total helplessness. To tell the friends of this child that she was in a very dangerous way was not necessary, they had already been so informed. My confidence in my resources for this disease, was, however, so confirmed, that I told the parents what, upon my solemn word, I believed; namely, that possibly by my method, and by that alone, the child could be cured. The reader is requested to

carry forward in his mind the substance of the last ten lines, as the case terminated badly, and also as it is the only one that has ended fatally, after having once began my treatment under my personal directions.

Every thing now that had been formerly done was ordered to be laid aside. The medicines, which I always myself prepared, were commenced and steadily pursued. As it has hitherto ever been my good fortune to obtain a quick change for the better, so it happened in this very deplorable case. In fourteen or sixteen days the constant wailing and moaning which the child had kept up gradually ceased; the hard and white stools that were hitherto passed assumed a darker hue; the craving appetite was easily assuaged; the nights were spent in sleepy tranquillity, and the flush upon the cheek no more seen. The amendment was so apparent to all, that my proposal, in perhaps rather more than a month, to have the child removed from a very confined quarter to another part of the town, was

adopted, and the journey in a carriage borne extremely well, the child resting in her mother's lap.

But now, however, comes the untoward part of this little history. From some circumstances that had occurred, and from the officious tattle of some kind friend, I deemed it prudent, if not necessary, to obtain about this time a written document from the parents, which went to say, that I undertook the care of the little girl at a time when her case was considered hopeless by Drs. A, B, and C, and that so and so had been done, and that they considered I had greatly relieved their child.

The sequel will prove how useful is a little foresight in all mundane matters. I continued to attend sedulously the patient, seeing her twice every day, and witnessing her progressive improvement, until at length I brought her to that state in which she could be dressed, very much assist herself, sit at table with her sister and friends, and walk at will about the saloon.

Now if it is remembered that this state of things was produced in little more than two months from my first attendance, and if a retrospective view is taken of the state of things in which I first found the sinking child, the most difficult person must conscientiously believe that my prognosis was nearly completed, and the patient in a fair way to be permanently cured. While affairs were thus going on, many circumstances took place to applaud that prudence which requested the written paper before mentioned, but which cannot be entered into here more minutely, for reasons easily imagined by the reader. Suffice it, on this head, to say, I considered myself not well treated: a difficulty about remuneration, and an observation of the friends arising from it, reaching me, relative to my not being a regular physician, and not possessing an University diploma (as though, forsooth, brains and experience could be handed to a medical man, nicely rolled up in a bit of parchment, with a seal in its corner), I discontinued at once my visits.

Notes and explanations then were interchanged, and the result was, a consultation to take place of those physicians, who had, according to the document, once pronounced the child's case hopeless. So then Professor Margellon (than which I believe there is no higher medical name in Paris) and the other M.D.'s and myself held council together as to the child's present condition. On this point there could be no differing in opinions. She was pronounced much and manifestly relieved, and by all means should be continued in my treatment and under my care, renouncing themselves every wish to interfere further in the case. The main difficulty was still, where it was, unfortunately, when this consultation began. I declared my intention of not continuing the treatment, under existing circumstances. The end of the business came to this: Professor Margellon, collecting from what I had said, and from the appearance of the medicines, that nothing so good could possibly be substituted, ordered a continuance of my plan, in the best

way it could be effected. The child was left in charge of Dr. C —, her old physician, under whose care she soon died. This case may appear to be spun out to an undue length, but I conceive it one the most important, as it proves, if proof is to be had upon the earth, that this patient was fast recovering under my practice and control, and when removed from their influence she sadly died. The entire approval of a leading professor in the university of Paris, and the other doctors in physic, may not, perhaps, be altogether disregarded by those, whose confidence in a particular treatment for atrophy may be much less manifest than their scepticism and dulness.

CASE XI.

COUGH WITH AN ATROPHOID TENDENCY.

Master Henry, the son of a money changer, residing in the Rue de la Paix, had been for some time troubled with cough, accompanied by emaciation and declining symptoms. As there was no

inflammatory action, I did not hesitate to put him under treatment, modified, of course, to the mildness of the complaint. After taking a slight course of the medicines, his usual energies were restored and his cough dissipated.

CASE XII.

SEVERE MARASMUS FROM DIABETES.

Lieut. Col. C——, of the army of India, residing at Tours, had, for a long period since his return from that country, been labouring under severe atrophy, arising from diabetes, or an immoderate discharge of water. In this case the emaciation was of a lamentable character, and all the symptoms, indeed, denoting the completest prostration of power. From having attended this gentleman's sister, in Tours, for a schirrous breast, I was consulted, and found my patient with the following symptoms: pulse 100, small and wiry; excessive hunger and thirst, particularly the latter, so much so, that I remember

his saying, he never passed a brook or a well, without wishing to plunge his head into it, to quench, if possible, his unyielding and everlasting thirst; much emaciation, and shortness of breath, the pupil of the eye contracted to a pin's point, countenance florid, and by no means indicating the mischief going on elsewhere. The action of the skin, or perspiration, quite superseded by an immense discharge from the kidneys, of a pale, sweet fluid, amounting to 10 or 14 pints *per diem*. From all this catalogue of miseries I could draw but an unsatisfactory prognosis, and with but slender hope of affording the poor colonel relief. I put him under treatment, ordering the most nutritious meats, the fine *eau de vie* of the country, with water, for his ordinary drink, and interdicting all vegetable matter. I soon had the inexpressible pleasure of perceiving a great change for the better in many of the symptoms, and above all, a decrease of the fluid, which was losing its tenuity, and becoming daily less and less. The pulse, from 100 went

down to 80 in three weeks; flesh, in six or eight, was accumulating upon the bones once more; and, in fine, there was every appearance of something approaching to recovery. Three months or so after I left Tours, I met his nephew at Dieppe, accidentally, who told me, his uncle had set sail for India, to secure his full colonelcy, for the sake not only of his own advantage, but affecting, as it did, materially the interests of his children; adding also, that for many years he had not been so well as at the period of his departure.

CASE XIII.

A SCHIRRHOUS TUMOUR MUCH DECREASED, BY URGING
AND PROMOTING THE ACTION OF THE CHYLI-
ROUS SYSTEM.

In connection with this last case, I will mention that of Mrs. D—, the sister, of whom I have already spoken. This lady, who was a resident in Tours, had been suffering considerably from a schirrhous tumour in her left breast, accompanied

by severe and lancinating pains. Many eminent Parisian surgeons had been consulted, and the opinion, I believe, was pretty unanimous as to the nature of the disease, and by more than one, extirpation had been pronounced absolutely necessary for the salvation of her existence. To this strong procedure the patient was, however, very adverse, fearing what is at all times a most painful operation, and calculating upon some fortunate change of constitution coming to her relief. To this lady I was very strongly recommended by a female friend, and after examining the seat of disease, stated what was my belief, that any assistance she could obtain from medicine would only be of a temporary or dubious nature, but if she pleased, I would put her under my treatment, and carefully watch its progress. This then was immediately commenced, and with a positive and well-marked good effect. After a lapse of six weeks, many distressing symptoms were assuaged; the tumour was neither so large, so hard, or so painful as heretofore, and

the retraction of the nipple of the breast by no means so complete. This structure, when I first saw the case, was nearly invisible, forming a corrugated hollow, instead of a protruding portion, in the midst of the knotted and indurated glands. It is not attempted, by the recital of this case, to aver that the medicines I use are capable of curing the formidable and often fatal schirrus. But it is submitted to every impartial reader, that a great and manifest change in the disorder occurred while the patient, in this instance, was taking them. The progress of amendment was going on when I left Tours, and the son of the lady (whom I saw at Dieppe), stated that his mother continued much better, and was gathering strength and cheerfulness. As more than two years are now elapsed since I had this information, of course I cannot say how the complaint now progresses, nor do I for one moment affect to declare, that my treatment has cured or will cure true schirrus; but that I am warranted in

believing it highly effective, and deserving a further trial, no unprejudiced person will deny.

CASE XIV.

PARTIAL MESENTERIC OBSTRUCTION.

The little son of Mr. K—, residing in the neighbourhood of Tours, was attacked with simple inflammatory fever, most probably from checked perspiration. Being called in, I was not long in ascertaining, that in addition to the new disease, the child had been labouring some time under incipient mesenteric obstruction. This was fully evinced after the subjugation of the inflammatory action by the usual means; by the protruding abdomen, hollow eyes, and craving appetite. A fortnight's course, in this case, proved quite sufficient to dissipate the original disorder, and to convert the once drooping delicate little patient into a hearty, ruddy boy, prepared for all the sports and nonsense incident to his age.

CASE XV.

PREVIOUS ATROPHY ENHANCED BY FEVERISH
ACCESSION.

This case, from a variety of circumstances, and the domestic interests which surrounded it throughout, is one to which I attach much importance; but should the reader deem me prolix and tedious in detailing it, its singularity must be my apology. Towards the end of the autumn of 1834, while practising at Dieppe, I was called suddenly to attend Master C. S., a youth of eleven or twelve years, who had been seized with fever in a violent and unexpected manner. Upon my arrival at the house, I found the patient in bed, and suffering from severe symptoms of fever and inflammatory action, fast progressing upon an irritable and reduced habit of body. Upon inquiry, I found that the young gentleman had the day previous arrived, in company with his sister and *bonne*, from a long and tedious journey, commencing at Baden, in Germany, and ending where I found him,

at Dieppe, a distance of 500 or 600 miles. This journey was evidently the exciting cause of the illness, an illness which I never saw surpassed in severity, or so nearly allied to that mysterious sleep of death to which we all must come. After a full investigation of all the symptoms (which, compared with what followed, were only trifles), I ordered a calomel purge, a common fever mixture, and ten leeches to be applied to the temples, promising a visit the first thing in the morning. Upon my arriving the next morning, I found, to my utter dismay, through the interference of an old faded gentleman (calling himself a friend of the family), the leeches had not been applied; consequently there was an increase of inflammatory action, and much delirium present. To the omission of the leeches I attribute much of the trouble and mischief which ensued. I endeavoured to counteract the old man's stupidity, by applying myself the leeches, ordered eighteen hours previously; but their effect was not so manifest as could have

been wished. Ordering the calomel to be repeated, the mixture continued, and the bleeding promoted, I took leave until the evening. In the evening the inflammatory symptoms had somewhat abated, although the pulse was 130, and the delirium increased. Ordered the hair to be cut off, and cold lotions applied constantly to the head, and stated the necessity of remaining during the night, in the event of any further change being requisite in the proceedings. In the night the fever and delirium increased, constant restlessness, picking of the face and bed-clothes, frequent startings, and dilated pupils. In the morning took away 5 or 6 ounces of blood from the arm, and ordered a blister to the nape of the neck, the cold lotions to be continued to the head, and a new fever mixture. In the evening the symptoms somewhat gone down, but the imminent danger of the case by no means lessened. Remained again all night. The two following days symptoms much the same. Leeches again applied. Fever now declining, and the delirium settling

down fast into coma. In the morning the stupor more confirmed — the patient perfectly unconscious of all surrounding objects, and swallowing the medicines with great difficulty. To the pressing inquiries of the father and mother of the young gentleman, I replied with candour, that I considered the case as far gone as to be nearly hopeless, but that some remaining energy in the pulse afforded a gleam of hope, which might be worth cultivating. This information, conveyed as delicately as circumstances permitted, produced all the effect upon the parents which the threatened loss of an only and much loved son was calculated to produce ; while the sick father, dying of phthisis, taking leave of his boy, and the mother sobbing in hysterics, formed a scene at once affecting and uncommon. The stupor, which succeeded the active fever and delirium, was for several days of a most marked and extraordinary character. All the measures which the best authors have recommended were put in practice—mustard cataplasms were applied, ammonia,

musk, bark, and claret, administered by my own hands over and over again. Still nothing appeared to rouse the patient from the lethargic state into which he had sunk, and he was abandoned almost by myself, and entirely so by his friends, to that death which seemed hovering perpetually around his bed. About this time, fourteen or sixteen days from the attack, the *bonne* I have mentioned before, from excessive fatigue, took also to her bed, and was in the greatest danger for three or four days, so that in this house of mourning there were three individuals, members of the same family, expecting almost hourly dissolution, in a foreign land. According to my notes of the case, on the sixteenth day there was a change in the young gentleman for the better, and with great joy I found a crisis was at hand: this the two following days confirmed. The skin poured forth its moisture, the urine threw down clouds of sediment, the tongue became less loaded, and consciousness returned: every day now produced some new evidence of

amendment, and in something more than a week from the amendment, I declared my patient out of immediate danger. A great deal nevertheless remained to be done, for the emaciation and weakness were terrible, and the atrophoid symptoms, with which the lad had been long afflicted, through this severe attack acquired new force. I learned from his friends, that my patient had been under the late lamented and talented Maton, when he was in London, for the original disease, but that little had been done for its relief. I explained in what position matters now stood, and that although the active enemy had been subdued, there was a latent one still in existence, whose undermining, never-ceasing influence there was much cause to fear. *Latet lateri lethalis arundo* was yet applicable to the case. The result of this communication (the substance of which Mr. and Mrs. S. appeared to be fully aware of), was, that a consultation should be held with the most eminent French practitioner in Dieppe, and accordingly Dr. Beni

was called in. A minute examination of what remained of the poor little patient then took place, and a second visit put the parents in possession of the opinion of Dr. Beni, *viz* that their son had been a long time, and was now labouring under that disease which the French designate *carreau*, and we mesenteric atrophy; and he added, “Madame, je suis bien fachè de vous dire que c'est une affaire finie. Il ne reste pas la moindre d'esperance.” This was conclusive: the French physician took his fee and his departure, and I remained to do what I could to cure this extraordinary case. I perceived, at once, the imposing footing which this declaration gave me, and that if I succeeded in curing the boy, the value of my services would be greatly enhanced, and proportionate praise accorded to me. I did succeed perfectly. The young gentleman got thoroughly well, and went into the north of England with his mother and uncle, the present Bishop of Madras, where afterwards I met him constantly, at his relation's seat, in the enjoyment of full

health. Master S. is nearly related to an illustrious duke, and this case is known in nearly all its details to various members of his family, moving in the highest spheres of rank.

CASE XVI.

HEREDITARY DISPOSITION TO MARASMUS.

I was requested, in Paris, to attend on the infant child of Mr. and Mrs. N., residing Rue Chausse d'Antin. This infant came into the world with all the signs of debility upon its frame, which went on increasing, day by day, until the period when I first saw it, being, to the best of my remembrance, about twelve or fourteen months old. This was a strongly-marked case of atrophy, accompanied by every symptom which could render a child's condition hopeless, and almost repulsive. The muscles were wasting all away, the skin was yellow and flaccid, the face more like a miserable old woman's in miniature than any other earthly thing; wailing perpetually, and craving for food.

The friends of this child of course expected it was beyond all the power of medicine to afford relief, and that it must assuredly die. My conviction was the reverse, because I had cured two cases equally deplorable. My particular treatment very speedily asserted its prerogative, and changed the features of the disease. In something more than a month many of the worst symptoms were gone: the face began to fill out, the yellow tinge of the skin was replaced by a healthy hue, the wailing no longer existed, and in fact, the child was fast getting well. Perseverance in the plan accomplished all that could be wished in the case; and the last information I received was, that the once abandoned little mortal was toddling with its brothers and sisters about the nursery, transformed into a chubby and comparatively healthy child.

CASE XVII.

ATROPHY THE RESULT OF AGGRAVATED MEASLES.

At the beginning of 1837, calling upon Mr. John Atkinson, of King William

Street, London Bridge, I saw, by accident, one of his children, which was stated to be almost in a dying state, abandoned by its friends, and nearly so by its medical attendant.

It appeared, after a recent attack of measles, that that sequel I have elsewhere mentioned took place; namely, a suppression of the chyliferous action, from the severity of the previous disease, accompanied by the usual symptoms, such as white stools, wasting, protuberant belly, &c. The gentleman then in attendance (whose name, well known, for obvious reasons cannot be given), pronounced the lungs to be affected, and had ordered the application of a blister (in conjunction with other remedies) on the chest, stating, nevertheless, his belief, that nothing he or any one else could do would be of much service in relieving the patient from its perilous state. Here then was a case of mesenteric obstruction, declared, by a gentleman of no inconsiderable fame, to be diseased lungs. On a further examination of the child, the manifestations of a stoppage in the chyle-

bearing ducts became still more evident, and I thought myself justified in declaring to the parents, without impugning the treatment of a man of acknowledged talent, that my opinion was opposed to his, and that my plan, moreover, if adopted, would perfectly cure the patient. This statement was listened to with that incredulity which usually attends fine promises, and which, unquestionably, fine promises in many instances deserve. But as matters could hardly be worse than they were, the child was consigned to my care, with the impression, that a few more days would terminate its life. A few more days, however, altered the entire complexion of the malady. The patient recovered thoroughly, and in robust health is not surpassed by any child of a corresponding age in the populous neighbourhood where its parents live.

The authenticity of this case is ascertainable with little trouble.

CONCLUDING REMARKS.

DURING the period of preparing this work, and its printing, three cases have taken place in my practice, which, in my mind, confirm still more the great efficacy of stimulating the lacteal and absorbent system, in some chronic and apparently untoward complaints; and this too, where none of the phenomena of obstructed chyle were sufficiently obvious to point out derangement of the nutrient function. Of these, the most striking and satisfactory is the case of Mrs. H., a lady advancing towards the middle condition of life, who had been suffering for six years from a rheumatic state of the knee joint. There were and had been present for a very long time, considerable enlargement and rigidity of the articulation, accompanied by shooting

pains, occasional numbness and coldness in the limb, and almost total lameness, requiring the use of crutches, or personal aid, to move from one apartment to another. This lady had been under the care of different professional men, of different degrees of eminence, and amongst them the most fashionable surgeon of the day, without experiencing any relief worthy of notice. Blisters, and the various counter-irritants, colchicum, and hard rubbings with the hand, and in fact, all the routine remedies for stiff rheumatic joints had been ordered and used, over and over again. It remained for me to cure this overgrown articulation and tiresome case, by the internal administration of alkalies and iron. A plan I had seen adopted by the Paris surgeons, of enveloping inflamed joints in oiled silk, when arising from acute rheumatism, was all the external assistance I thought it necessary to use; and that, indeed, was but for a few days' continuance, as the patient found the rucking of the silk inconvenient, and without any hesitation took it off.

The iron remedy was, however, all-sufficient: the swelled joint decreased, the pain dispersed, and the limb became, in about four months, nearly as shapely and as serviceable as its fellow. Mrs. H. improved in health in all respects, during rather a long course of the medicine, and after being confined to her house almost constantly for years, now walks with the greatest ease whenever and wherever she pleases; being at Brighton, enjoying its pure air, while I am writing these particulars of her case.

Miss C., a young lady residing also in my neighbourhood, had been for a long time much annoyed with violent and racking pain in the head, for which she had been bled, and depleted otherwise to a large extent. In this case there was nothing to indicate a suspension of the chyliferous system, the powers of the constitution being good, the flesh firm, the voice powerful, and appetite unimpaired. The stimulation of such a subject by the

iron tonics would appear, to almost any reflecting practitioner, as a very rash course of proceeding; nor did I feel myself justified in putting this patient under such treatment, without previously trying some reducing remedies, which, however, produced no good result. After abstracting eight ounces of blood from the nape of the neck, and proving to satisfaction the inutility of purgation and blood-letting, and that the heat and pain of the head were rather increased than alleviated, I commenced the **FER-ALKALINE** course, beginning cautiously with small doses once a day, and noting the effect upon the pulse. An amendment took place in a week or ten days, and it authorized a larger dose of the carbonate of iron, which the heart and entire system bore admirably. In fine, the corded feel of the head, its former tenderness and pain, and the nervous derangement of the patient generally, were all dispelled by the treatment in question, and returned no more. It may hardly be worth while to state, that some evaporating lotion was

applied externally — but what could that do towards curing an intense headache, which had for two or three years endured ?

Mrs. ——, a young married lady, in consequence of checked perspiration, ensuing from temporary exposure to cold, while retiring from a ball on a December evening, was attacked, two days afterwards, with violent rheumatic fever, attended with all its immediate consequences : increased pulse, hot skin, and tormenting pain of the lower limbs. Leeches being applied, colchicum and febrifuges administered, according to the received and orthodox principles of the healing art, the more acute symptoms disappeared, and the patient was permitted in less than ten days to leave her bedroom. The adhesive and affectionate nature of rheumatism was, however, as usual, not to remain undisplayed : a gnawing and constant pain took up its position in the left hip, rendering the slightest mo-

tion almost unbearable, over which neither colchicum nor external irritants seemed to have any sort of effect. Ten days or a fortnight were wasted in attempting the accustomed assuagements, and no relief being obtained, my fair patient began to evince that impatience and fretfulness, which by all prescription appears to characterize the daughters of Eve, and to express something like apprehension of permanent lameness. This of course I would not listen to; and requesting a little more time and fortitude, I put my patient at once under my usual successful treatment.

The medicine acted like a charm, and in a few days put to flight the lameness, pain, and other results of an acute attack of rheumatic fever. Three months have elapsed, and the lady remains perfectly well.

AN interesting subject of inquiry is offered, I think, to physiologists, in the *modus operandi* on the human frame of

particular classes of medicine; and as it is a field of useful research, which has hitherto been very partially and unsatisfactorily explored, a large quantum of legitimate fame must await any individual who will lay down the energies of a cultivated mind to the thorough elucidation of this neglected branch of philosophy, and whose successful labours may point attention to new and undiscovered lights towards perfecting the living condition of the noble, great, and matchless family of man.

How poor is our present information as to the internal agency and working of nearly all those medicines we are accustomed to confide in, for the relief of the every-day disorders of humanity. "*Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas.*" Who is he that will explain to the world with any semblance of infallible truth (for an ingenious unproved theory alone will not suffice) the way in which mercury, properly given, can cure the visitations of illicit love? Or why a grain or two of opium, in contact for a short time with the coats

of the stomach, stimulates the heart's systole thirty times oftener in the space of sixty seconds, than the contraction would take place if the little bit of concentrated poppy juice was not there? And, more wonderful still, why its magic influence, if undisturbed, should mount to the throne of reason, and, pervading the beautiful mechanism of the brain, transport the delighted dreamer to ideal worlds of unsubstantial bliss, surpassing far the most gorgeous realities of the greatest wealth or voluptuous kings?

We do not know upon what principle prussic acid almost instantaneously kills, when taken even in a small quantity; or what are those functional or other changes which the narcotic poisons produce so rapidly on the system, and which cause death.

Doubtless, although a great deal will be discovered in the approaching time which is now unknown, concerning the specific changes which different medicines accomplish upon the fluids and solids of the body, and however desirable it may

be for the sake of science that every thing connected with medicine and human health should be minutely examined and explained, it does not appear, from what we at present know of the matter, that any very astounding results would accrue to the sum of human happiness, by our information being even very considerably enlarged upon these precise points. As for instance, we have every reason to believe that tartarized antimony, dissolved in water and introduced to the stomach, causes vomiting by inducing a slight description of stimulus or inflammation on its internal coat, because it does so when applied to the external skin. Yet is that particular medicine not one whit more serviceable or available on that account. The result would take place, namely the vomiting, whether we understood or not by what means or action it was brought about. So also if strong sulphuric acid is swallowed, we know that it will burn a hole in the stomach of the swallower and kill him, because it is the property of that body to erode all kinds of flesh.

But our dread of swallowing it, or our knowledge of its consequences, would not be augmented by our being able (which we are not) to describe the chemical phenomena which achieve the disorganization. It would seem that nature rears an almost impassable bar to an explanation of those recondite truths, which are not vitally essential to the existence of mankind.

I think it may be safely affirmed, that a great number of medical men, and they certainly of the most studious and reflecting class, have some favourite theories or medicines, which they believe to be deserving of an especial confidence, and by means of which they, mentally at least, claim the distinction for themselves of curing some malady or maladies better and quicker than their simply routine neighbours. It is quite unnecessary to individualize instances of this belief in men (justly eminent) of the present day; for all who have opportunities of seeing and appreciating their prescriptions must be cognizant of the fact; and that disease will yield to the just treatment of

one gentleman, which has for months baffled the misconception or prejudices of another.

However much such matters may savour of empiricism, it is unquestionable, that the most successful remedies and lines of practice have originated with individuals, who, regardless of the clamours of a *clique*, or the sneers of malice, have firmly and conscientiously proffered a particular discovery or treatment to the notice of the world. Jenner was ridiculed, at the outset of his career, by the medical sages of the last century, and his immortal preventive styled as only worthy of the oblivion of the panaceas of Paracelsus: John Abernethy, with his great talents and benevolent heart, has been stigmatized as a monstrous quack, by different greedy and impertinent cox-combs in this.

I have somewhere read, that as much praise is due to any professional man for calling attention to the concealed virtues of old medicines, or combinations of them, for the relief of disease, as is due to the

discoverer of new compounds or remedies, or fabricators of potent and abstruse salts. That “there is nothing new under the sun,” may be true or not; but that the new school is a vast deal wiser and more enlightened than the one that has passed away, is as palpable as the hourly evidence of the moderns being able to travel over more space in one day than the by-gone dunces did in ten. Thank God, the schoolmaster continues to look abroad, and his wholesome birch promises to whip prejudice, superstition, and ignorance from the land. No more silly charmings to remove disease, royal touchings for the evil, viper broths, powdered human skull or *album græcum* for the falling sickness. All such absurdities, let us hope, are for ever gone.

However, to resume. The practice which it is the intention of this book to recommend, claims attention more from its specific results than from any novelty which it possesses; and that it has not been more extensively employed, is one of those uncommon anomalies

which every now and then astonishes our experience. It is, as my cases prove, to a certain extent a treatment of time, and those practitioners who have tried it without arriving at the successful conclusions that I have done, must have been very unobserving of its effects, or ignorant of its adaptation or not to the particular disease for which they prescribed it. Many anxious hours of thought have I consumed in endeavouring to account for the action of the combined powers and influence of iron, alkali, and a bitter powder properly administered, upon diseased motion in the human body, and am not ashamed to acknowledge, that my meditations as to the manner in which they work a wonderful and healthful change are inconclusive. To say that they invigorate the heart, assist digestion, and oxydize the alvine secretion, is to say nothing; there are plenty of proofs from the results that they do this: but now? We give cinchona bark, or its essential salt, to cure intermittent fever, and we do cure it; and also foxglove, to

reduce the pulse and promote urine; but I should be glad to converse with the physiologist who will tell me how the consummation is brought about, not having hitherto encountered him.

It is more useful to contemplate what we can do than what we cannot; and I am abundantly satisfied to ask a fair trial of that system propounded in this humble effort, for the relief of those diseases chiefly characterized by debility, unattended with great inflammatory accession. I have referred such system to a stimulation of the lacteal and absorbent vessels, and a consequent promotion of a flow of chyle; and all its phenomena I conceive to be based upon the working of such a change. In the mesenteric atrophy of children, if glandular abdominal suppuration has not taken place, the practice is infallible and conclusive; and I unhesitatingly declare my ability to cure that disorder in its worst stages by normal and simple means. And moreover am I persuaded, that the influence of the remedy would be most apparent in many de-

rangements, which, superficially regarding them, are not so depending upon obstructed chyle. The ancients, it would seem, possessed the art of making fat people lean, and lean ones fat. This remedy will be found in a great measure to effect that change. In dropsy, diabetes, chronic rheumatism, scrofula, chlorosis, and hepatic enlargements, it is well worthy the most serious consideration of thinking people; and the earnest appeal of comparatively an obscure member of the profession of medicine, is, he trusts, not altogether vainly made towards its **MANIFOLD, IMPORTANT, AND INTRINSIC MERITS.**

THE END.

